

PATRIE!



VICTORIEN SARDOU

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VICTORIEN SARDOU

PATRIE !

An Historical Drama in Five Acts
(Eight Scenes)

BY
VICTORIEN SARDOU

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY
BARRETT H. CLARK



WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE TRANSLATOR

GARDEN CITY NEW YORK
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WITH THE GRATITUDE OF THE TRANSLATOR

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INTRODUCTION

Sardou is probably the oftenest referred to and least read of any dramatist of modern times. His name, together with the clever noun invented by Bernard Shaw, is constantly used as a term of reproach; the phrase "well-made play" is usually employed in a derogatory sense, as if a well-constructed play were something to be avoided. This state of affairs would not be so regrettable were it not that the plays of Sardou and his master Scribe are, with very few exceptions, inaccessible to English readers. Even Shaw based some of his most mordant and damning remarks about "Sardoodledom" upon English adaptations, and confesses that he never read "Fédora" in the original. "Gismonda," the other play he saw at the same time with the English version of "Fédora," has never been published in French. When a critic of Shaw's standing says, "Of course I was not altogether new to it, since I had seen 'Diplomacy Dora,' and 'Théodora,' and 'La Toscadora,' and the other machine dolls from the same

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firm," he stands convicted of arguing from insufficient premises, for "Diplomacy" is an adaptation, while "Théodora," like "Gismonda," is as yet in manuscript. "La Tosca" was not published until some years after the appearance of Shaw's article.

If Sardou is to be justly estimated, he must be read, and if critics are to link the names of Sardou and Scribe together as nefarious purveyors of "well-made plays," they should at least not do so on the authority of former critics, many of whom have either not read the plays of the dramatists in question, or have only a superficial acquaintance with their works in the original.

The present translation of "Patrie!" is so far as I am aware the first Sardou play in English which follows the original text line for line. There are numerous adaptations, to some of which the name of the author is added, but far oftener bearing only the name of the adapter. It is, therefore, with the hope that this much-maligned dramatist may be sympathetically, or at least intelligently, read and calmly judged that this famous play has been included in "The Drama League Series."

Victorien Sardou was born in Paris on September 7, 1831. His early years were spent in the neigh-

borhood of the Faubourg St. Antoine, not far from the Place de la Bastille. He was educated at the College Henri IV, from which he was graduated in 1852, after a career which was in no manner of speaking brilliant. The youth had been an interested spectator of the stormy days of '48, and it is beyond doubt that these early impressions were all carefully noted and used in later years. After his graduation he wished to enter the field of literature, for which he had previously shown some predilection, but his practical-minded father insisted upon a more lucrative pursuit. The young man chose medicine. After a perfunctorily attended course of study at the hospital, Sardou was left alone in Paris, as his father, under the stress of financial difficulties, left the north for his native home in the Midi. Victorien then led the life of poor students, sharing his attic, trying to write, and gaining an insight into the seamy side of the "Vie de Bohème." The melodramatic story is told* that Sardou was walking the quays one night, bent on suicide, and met a water-carrier standing in the

* In Jerome A. Hart's "Sardou and the Sardou Plays" (Lippincott), the most complete and exhaustive study of Sardou which has yet appeared.

doorway of an unfinished building. "The water-carrier audibly remarked: 'Ah, mon ami, you don't know when you are well off.' The words were scarcely out of his mouth when a block of granite fell with a crash and killed him. Even then Sardou was superstitious, and, believing from this accident that he had yet room to hope, went home, and again took up his pen."

The result was a number of plays, written in various styles, and showing the influence of numerous masters. One of these, "La Reine Ulfra," he offered to Rachel, who refused it. However, Mlle Desfossés, the rival of the celebrated tragédienne, accepted the play, and failed dismally. The same fate awaited the second play, "La Taverne des Etudiants," which was performed at the Odéon in 1854. Then followed a period of disappointment: plays were peddled from theatre to theatre, and collaborators proved treacherous. But three years later he met the woman who became his wife in 1858. She had the good fortune to be a personal friend of the famous Mlle Déjazet.

Through Déjazet the young dramatist achieved his first success: "Les Premières Armes de Figaro" was produced at Déjazet's theatre in 1859. As yet

Sardou was only trying his wings. His early plays were verse tragedies and comedies, even his success at the Théâtre Déjazet, were imitative works, written for the most part while he was making a close study of the works of Scribe. In 1860 his first acknowledged masterpiece, "Les Pattes de Mouche," met with the recognition it deserved at the Gymnase. This play firmly established Sardou as a successful playwright, and henceforth he had little difficulty, as may be imagined, in placing his next plays. These were produced in quick succession. "Nos Intimes," "Les Ganaches," and "Nos Bons Villageois" are among the best. They are well-constructed comedies of manners, built upon Sardou's own amplification of the Scribe formula.

Many more of the same kind were to be written, but Sardou, a business man as well as an artist, varied his themes to suit the taste of the time. Contemporaneous manners and customs, modes of thought and idea, all found their place in comedies and melodramas, while politics and religion formed the basis of more than one serious work. Like Augustus Thomas—who has declared that "the theatre is vital only when visualizing some idea in the public mind at the moment"—Sardou believed in giving

the public what it wanted. The Parisian public was discriminating and sophisticated, and Sardou knew this; he satisfied his public, which, in return, made of him a comparatively rich and indubitably celebrated man. But comedies of the day, plays in which contemporaneous politics and ideas played a large part, were not the sole concern of this indefatigable dramatist: melodrama, chiefly historical, possessed charms for him. He had always been interested in archeology and history, and the task of reconstructing historical backgrounds for such plays as "Patrie!" and "La Haine" must have been congenial work.

The prodigious output of this versatile man, its variety and its average merit, can scarcely be conceived by any mere cataloguing of titles and subjects, yet some idea may be formed when it is learned that besides the few plays already referred to, his *Théâtre complet* would include verse tragedies, historical and mythical melodramas, political comedies of intrigue, drawing-room comedies and farces, scientific and mystery plays. These are laid in Russia, the United States, Greece, Rome, Spain, England. "Daniel Rochat" treats of a moral and religious problem; "Thermidor" is a psychological

play laid in the troublous times of the Revolution; "Rabagas" is a historical satire of the *Commune*; "L'Oncle Sam," a satire on American family life; "Ferréol" is one of the earliest examples of the criminal or "crook" play; "Spiritisme" hinges upon the subject which Belasco later used in "The Return of Peter Grimm"; "Maison neuve" is a picture of middle-class tradesmen; "Fernande" treats of the opening of gambling casinos; "Les Ganaches" of the advent of the railway.

The enormous output of Sardou might seem to indicate some "machine-made" process, but it must be remembered that Sardou had during his early struggles been a close student of dramatic technic, and by the time "Les Pattes de Mouche" was performed, this technic was well in hand. From that day on he bent his efforts to perfecting what he had learned, and applying it. This technic has been for years the butt of critics, many of whom seem to assume that because an artist has perfect command of his medium he has therefore nothing to say. To base a statement of the sort upon English adaptations of "Divorçons!" "Dora," and "Les Pattes de Mouche" would not be wholly unjust, nor can it fairly be urged that Sardou is a great thinker; he

is not. On the other hand, a careful study of all his plays, a sympathetic reading of "Patrie!" and two or three of the better comedies, can but lead one to the conclusion that here is a dramatist endowed with rare power to tell a story, picture a struggle, and portray men and women with considerable skill and insight.

Occasionally a critic like Professor Brander Matthews or Mr. Jerome A. Hart has gone to the trouble of reading the plays and arriving at a sane estimate, but these are exceptions. The French critics, too, are fair. René Doumic said: "He is endowed with very rare qualities, and all that he lacks is to have a higher conception of his art. Still, there is but one voice to proclaim him the most expert among the masters of the stage." The careful and discriminating Jules Lemaître remarked that he was " . . . a power . . . one of the finest dramatic temperaments of the century . . . in tragedy he has twice or thrice attained to grandeur and almost to beauty . . . one of the greatest dramatic authors of his time. 'Patrie' and 'Divorçons!' do not fall far short of being masterpieces." And Emile Faguet adds: "This man not only possessed skill in construction, emotional power, and

wit in dialogue, but philosophical penetration as well. . . . French audiences will long remember the man who made them laugh, who made them weep, who even made them think; who depicted France to foreign audiences in her best guise, and who honored her greatly in more ways than one."

"Patrie!" was originally performed on March 18, 1869, at the Porte St.-Martin Theatre in Paris. Owing to a number of accidents, it was not seen at the Comédie Française until 1901. Meantime, it had been seen in Italy, Belgium, Germany, and the United States. It is said, in addition, that among the first plays to be produced at the Comédie on the expiration of the present war is "Patrie!"

While this drama cannot be assumed as being typical of all Sardou's work, it is representative of a great part of it. Sardou was never a "thesis" dramatist, yet he rarely wrote solely for the sake of the play. He treated, as we have said, religious, moral, political, and historical questions, but never did he, like Dumas *filis*, deliberately attempt to set forth and prove a thesis. "Patrie!" is primarily a dramatic entertainment, but it presents at the same time food for thought: the struggle between human passion and love of one's country may be taken as the dra-

matic epitome of all struggle. Taking for his magnificent background the down-trodden Flanders under the cruel subjection of the Spaniards, with the Duke of Alba at their head, he conceived a play of patriotism, love, and death that is still as moving as on the day it was written. Yet the struggle, *per se*, its psychological import, is never thrust forward to the detriment of the play: Sardou was too great an artist to introduce a *raisonneur*. For him the play was the important consideration. That is why "Patrie!" is likely to live longer as drama than "Les Idées de Madame Aubray." Sardou was first a dramatist, and second a thinker; Dumas *fils* was first a great thinker, and a good dramatist in spite of his sermons, his theses, and his *raisonneurs*.

In his later years Sardou suffered from his collaboration with Sarah Bernhardt; for her he wrote many spectacular melodramas—"La Tosca," "Gismonda," "Cléopâtre," "Théodora"—in which the "star" parts were written for an actress who cared only for a rôle in which she might appear to advantage. These efforts, in spite of many splendid scenes here and there, are practically negligible in any consideration of the plays as a whole. Sardou's best work was done before he signed his contracts with

“Sarah.” He is assured of a place among those artists who portrayed sections of the life of their time, truthfully, amusingly, with the hand of a master.

BARRETT H. CLARK.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

I have tried to preserve so far as possible the spirit of the original text; to that end I have left the names, titles, and occasional expressions (such as the Duke's "Vive-Dieu!") unchanged. The style of the dialogue is at times rhetorical and somewhat stilted, but I have preserved this so far as I was able, believing that any sort of paraphrase would tend to throw the whole out of key. The stage-directions are complete and, even if they are found at times to be unnecessarily so for the reader, I have considered it better to present a Sardou play to the English reading public for the first time as it came from the dramatist.

B. H. C.

PERSONS REPRESENTED

THE COUNT DE RYSOOR, a Flemish nobleman

THE MARQUIS DE LA TRÉMOÏLLE, a French nobleman

JONAS THE BELLRINGER

KARLOO VAN DER NOOT, a Flemish nobleman

THE DUKE OF ALBA

NOIRCARMES, Grand Provost

VARGAS, of the Spanish court

MAÎTRE ALBERTI, Doña Rafaële's physician

DELRIO, of the Spanish court

FIRST OFFICER OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE

GALÈNA, a Flemish citizen

SECOND OFFICER OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE

WILLIAM OF ORANGE

A BREWER

RINCON, a Spanish captain

NAVARRA, a Spanish officer

GOBERSTRAET, a Flemish citizen

A PASTOR

MIGUEL, of the Spanish court

PERSONS REPRESENTED

MAÎTRE CHARLES, the executioner

CORTADILLA, of the Spanish court

BAKKERZEEL, a Flemish citizen

CORNÉLIS, a Flemish citizen

AN ENSIGN (Spanish)

A SPY

THE HERALD

DOMINGO, servant of Alba

A MAJORDOMO

A COURIER

A SOLDIER

DOÑA DOLORÈS, wife of Rysoor

DOÑA RAFAËLE, Alba's daughter

SARAH MATHISOON, a Flemish woman

THE WOMAN SHOPKEEPER

GUDULE, servant of Dolorès

A WOMAN OF THE STREETS

JOSUAH KOPPESTOCK, a Fleming

The scene is laid at Brussels, in 1568.

Patrie! was presented for the first time at the Porte St. Martin Theatre, at Paris, on March 18, 1869.

PATRIE !

ACT I

SCENE I: *The market-place of the Vieille Boucherie at Brussels. There are large pillars and cross-beams which still bear their iron hooks. This market-place, abandoned by the merchants, has been occupied by the Spanish troops, who have turned it into a camp. Up-stage the end of a street, and some gables of houses covered with snow, may be seen. Under the pillars there are three huge fires: up-stage to the right, down-stage to the left. Here and there among the pillar bases cuirasses, flags, arms, and rugs of various sorts are strewn about. There is a group of officers gathered around the fire to the left, and groups of soldiers around the other two, lying on the straw, or seated on old rugs, playing dice, drinking, polishing their weapons, or cooking. Soldiers' children and women of the streets come and go, and from time to time pour out drinks for soldiers or officers in one or other of the groups. Scattered about are heaps of broken furniture, objects of all sorts, indications of the pillage. Half-*

way up-stage to the left is a cart full of linens, vases, etc. The disorder incident to the military occupation of a city is everywhere visible. Patrols come and go. The beat of drums and of distant fusillades are occasionally heard. Here and there are benches, buffets, and casks. Down-stage to the left there is a table with tankards of beer and goblets; to the right, in front of a pillar, there are two stools.

As the curtain rises, the following are discovered: RINCON, NAVARRA, MIGUEL, an Ensign, soldiers, lancers, pikemen, artillerymen, women of the streets, and children. There is a loud roll of drums in the street.

RINCON [*seated, left, at the table, with the Ensign and NAVARRA, with whom he is throwing dice*].
What's that?

MIGUEL [*looking up-stage*]. Another consignment of prisoners.

RIN. The devil! That makes the twentieth that's entered Brussels since this morning. Why are they brought here? Put them in the Jacobins'!

MIG. But, Captain, the Jacobins', the wood market, the Egmont palace—they are all full to overflowing.

RIN. And so is the Boucherie! Where the devil can we put them?

ENSIGN. Well, Señor Rincon, over there is a sort of stable, to the left of the old pig-pen. Throw them in there—it's good enough for them!

RIN. [*rising*]. I'll look at it. [*To the soldiers.*] Throw some wood on the fire. Hell and damnation! we're freezing! [*He goes out, left.*]

MIG. [*to the soldiers, who are up-stage*]. Hey! Wood, you there!

SOLDIERS. There's no more left.

MIG. [*taking RINCON'S place*]. Well, chop some!

SOLDIERS. Very well, Lieutenant. [*They chop up a cask with a hatchet.*]

NAVARRA [*playing*]. Ten! Nine — [*Gunshots are heard in the distance.*] Hello, what's that?

MIG. Rebels—they've been dispatched on short notice.

NAV. Downright foolishness, to waste good powder that way! It's too good for these heretic dogs!

[CORTADILLA appears up-stage. He is greeted with laughter, as he gives some geese which he has stolen to some of the women to pluck. He then draws forth a rabbit from his volumi-

nous breeches; the soldiers immediately snatch the rabbit from him. Laughing, the noise of arguments, cries, etc.]

Hey there! Silence! *Mille diables!*

ENSIGN. They're drunk!

MIG. [*playing*]. Bah! let them be! This is carnival season.

ENSIGN. That's so—*Mardi-gras*.

NAV. And to think that we're here, freezing to death for these damned Flemings!

A SOLDIER [*who has entered from the rear*]. Captain Rincon's presence is requested at the Town Hall.

MIG. He isn't here.

NAV. [*to the Ensign, who holds a tankard*]. Pour!

ENSIGN. Empty! [*To one of the women.*] Hey, Carmelita!

CARMELITA [*coming forward*]. Do the señors wish something to drink?

ENSIGN. Yes, fair child! [*She pours out beer for them.*]

RIN. [*reëntering*]. Upon my faith! I don't know what to do: here comes the whole town!

MIG. Captain, you are wanted at the Town Hall.

RIN. I know it—it is about the Civil Guard.

ENSIGN. Are they being disarmed?

RIN. Yes, it is much safer! [*To the soldier at the right who is polishing his sword.*] Hand me your sword and a glass of beer. [*To CARMELITA, who runs to him.*] Ah, it's you, Carmelita?

CAR. [*pouring out beer for him*]. Yes, Captain.

RIN. [*as he drinks, he notices a gold chain she wears around her neck*]. You have a pretty chain—who gave it to you, child?

[*Other women about to look at the chain.*]

CAR. Pacheco gave it to me.

RIN. [*kissing her*]. Pacheco is a happy mortal! Good-bye!

A SOLDIER [*at the left*]. Captain, here are a dozen more arrests——

RIN. A dozen? Ten thousand devils!

MIG. Put them under these pillars.

RIN. Wherever you like, so far as I am concerned! I give it up, Miguel! [*He goes out, up-stage to the right.*]

MIG. [*to the soldiers*]. Bring in the prisoners!

[*LA TRÉMOÏLLE and RYSOOR are brought in at the back, left, guarded by two files of soldiers, with an officer at the head.*]

OFFICER [*to LA TRÉMOÏLLE, who halts, showing surprise at being conducted to such a spot. The officer*

urges him forward, pushing him on the shoulder].
March, you!

LA TR. [*with dignity*]. I beg your pardon, my friend! My sword has been taken from me, but I still have my cane, and I warn you if you touch me again as you did a moment ago I shall break it over your shoulders.

OFFICER [*raising his sword*]. What's that, rascal?

LA TR. [*disarming him by a stroke of the cane, and beating him over the shoulders*]. Take that, you scoundrel!

[There is a menacing movement among the soldiers. The officer picks up his sword and is about to rush at LA TRÉMOÏLLE, when NAVARRA and MIGUEL interpose.]

MIG. [*to LA TRÉMOÏLLE*]. You'll get cut to pieces!

LA TR. [*eying him*]. I beg your pardon, you are——?

MIG. Lieutenant ——

LA TR. And I—Marquis de la Trémoille, faithful subject and friend of his Majesty Charles King of France; although I am a prisoner, I shall allow no subaltern to raise his hand against me! You may tell that to your Government. Is there no place to sit down here?

MIG. [*who, together with NAVARRA and the Ensign, has taken off his hat politely at mention of LA TRÉMOÏLLE'S name*]. Monsieur le Marquis—that is different! Here are seats, over against the pillar.

LA TR. I hope they're clean? [*He goes to the right and notices RYSOOR, who is about to sit down on one of the stools.*] Ah, Monsieur, I beg your pardon!

RYSOOR [*bowing*]. Monsieur, after you!

LA TR. [*bowing likewise*]. I beg you, Monsieur!

[*The officers return, left, to warm themselves over the fire.*]

RYs. You are French, Monsieur, while I am a citizen of this city: I am the host!

LA TR. Monsieur, I need not inquire whether you are a gentleman!

RYs. [*bowing*]. Count de Rysoor, Monsieur—quite at your service.

LA TR. [*bowing*]. I am the Marquis de la Trémoille, Monsieur—at yours! [*They put on their hats again.*] Since you belong to this city, perhaps you will be good enough to inform me where we are?

RYs. Monsieur le Marquis, this building is the former slaughter-house which the Spaniards have used for a camp, as you see.

LA TR. [*looking up-stage*]. What a camp!

RYS. And what soldiers! The scum of the earth! Neopolitans, Swiss, Portuguese, all of them adventurers, highway robbers, cut-throats, and pillagers; they've gathered here with their women and their bastards, under a flag that permits them to commit the vilest outrages with impunity! This is our shameful yoke—it is killing us: this armed rabble that calls itself Spanish troops!

LA TR. Then this, Monsieur, is where they pack those who are arrested—people like you and me?

RYS. And who are executed if need be.

LA TR. Nothing but butchery?

RYS. Always!

LA TR. Good! I beg your pardon, Monsieur le Comte, but I have only arrived. This is my first visit to Brussels.

RYS. Disagreeable beginning, Monsieur le Marquis!

LA TR. Especially for a pleasure journey!

RYS. Pleasure?

LA TR. Exactly. I don't bore you, I hope?

RYS. Quite the contrary! We could not spend our time to better advantage waiting for the Grand Provost, who will decide our fate.

LA TR. [*about to sit down*]. Let us gossip, then.

But, one thing more: I must tell you, I am a Calvinist.

RYS. I am delighted to hear it, Monsieur.

LA TR. Are you perhaps of the same faith?

RYS. I am proud to admit it!

LA TR. [*offering his hand*]. Well, well, Monsieur le Comte, let me shake your hand—with all my heart!

RYS. [*shaking hands with LA TRÉMOÏLLE*]. Monsieur!

[*Shots are heard in the distance.*]

LA TR. What is that?

RYS. [*taking off his hat*]. Heretics, like you and me—they are being shot!

LA TR. [*taking off his hat*]. God receive their souls! [*He seats himself.*] I was saying that His Majesty, in whose favor I am so fortunate as to find myself on account of my tennis—I am a champion—His Majesty summoned me to him, and said to me: “La Trémoille, it is too warm for you here, my friend. Go and visit Italy or the Netherlands!” I came to the Netherlands. At the frontier, exactly in the middle of the river, whom do I see surrounded by a company of cavaliers? M. Louis de Nassau. He shouts to me: “Hello, La Trémoille!” I knew

him at the Louvre, at the time when he came there in company with his brother, Prince of Orange, an excellent gentleman!

RYS. The Prince of Orange? Ah, Monsieur le Marquis, there is the loyalest, wisest, and bravest citizen of this land! The pride of the Netherlands—perhaps its saviour! So his brother, Monsieur de Nassau, hailed you?

LA TR. And I cried out to him: “Monsieur, what the devil are you doing in the water there?” Then he answered: “I’m looking for a ford for my men! Will you join us?” “What are you doing?” “We’re going to break a lance with the Spanish señors!” I was delighted. As a Protestant, you understand, I lost no love on His Catholic Majesty King Philip.

RYS. And as for me, I hate him cordially!

LA TR. He’s a melancholiac. I dislike him, too. Then I said to Monsieur de Nassau: “Indeed I will join you, and gladly!” We went on all day, and our band grew every mile we rode. At night, we were a veritable little army. Next day we encountered the Spaniards at Jemmingen! We fought, or, rather, *they* fought us—a total defeat. My horse was wounded, shot under me; then the horse fell on me! A Spaniard disarmed me, and sold me to his

captain for a hundred pistoles—harness thrown in. The captain sold me in turn to the colonel for a thousand ducats, who resold me for three times that amount to the Duke of Alba, who fixes my ransom at a hundred thousand French crowns.

RYS. And the Duke sold you for——?

LA TR. Oh, no—it stopped there, luckily. The price might grow to more than I am worth!

RYS. Well, a hundred thousand crowns is very——

LA TR. It *is* considerable! I wrote to my brother, asking him to raise the sum. It will cost me two or three châteaux, but from among the forty districts I shall still have a few left.

RYS. And meantime?

LA TR. Meantime, I've been bored, as you may easily imagine! To come to the Netherlands on a pleasure trip, and there find myself penned up at Jemmingen between two guards! Well, I said to myself: "I gave my word not to cross the frontier; therefore I shall not cross the frontier, but—I *must* see Brussels! Ventre-Mahon! Never may it be said that I made a pleasure journey to the Netherlands without seeing Brussels in carnival time!"

RYS. And here we are!

LA TR. Yes, here I am—arrested the moment I set foot in the land—it is rather unfortunate, on *Mardi-gras*.

[*Sounds of a dispute between two women up-stage. They enter, surrounded by soldiers, who encourage them. MIGUEL and some officers separate the combatants.*]

RYS. [*carefully watching the group at the back, which gradually disperses among the pillars*]. Yes, to-day is *Mardi-gras*! Ah, Monsieur le Marquis, this day three years ago, under Cardinal Granville and Madame la Gouvernante, you would have seen nothing but continual feasting and merrymaking—masks, sarabandes, and jousts! The whole week there was dancing, night and day, at the Egmont Palace, while for the entire month the Prince of Orange held open house. To-day Monsieur d'Egmont is dead: he died on the scaffold, and his wife goes from door to door begging bread for her little ones; the Prince of Orange has no longer a roof over his head: he who once had a king's fortune is reduced to the necessity of selling his goldplate to the Jews of Strassburg to supply ammunition for his followers! And this city! This once flourishing city, rich beyond her rivals—this unfortunate city is

nothing more than a bivouac where the Spaniards and their horses wallow in the straw at every street corner. Everywhere streets are hushed in silence and sorrow, streets through which an occasional passer-by skulks, clinging close to the walls for fear of jostling drunken soldiers! Everywhere the shops are closed, workshops stand empty! From every belfry floats the black flag! On every door hangs mourning! [*Gunshots in the distance.*] Every instant that rattle of musketry telling the tale of death—a ghastly knell reminding us that more poor devils are seeing the last of life.

LA TR. Monsieur le Comte, this is a hideous carnival!

RYS. You have already seen how it is celebrated in the country! There it is different: they don't take the trouble to bury the dead! The course of the Royal Army can be traced by the flight of the vultures—entire villages without a soul in them! Smoking ruins everywhere you look! Ruined walls! Before every door a pool of blood, where bodies fester, lying about at the mercy of wolves! Herds of women and children, dying of hunger, snatching food from the very beasts of the field! And everywhere, everywhere the eternal gibbet! When the gallows

are too heavy to bear an extra burden they use trees; when the trees are overweighted, then gates, sheds, gable-ends, sign-posts! Every overhanging projection is a gallows! And when these leave no room—a wheel on a pole, and from each spoke hangs a victim. These objects line every approach to the gates of Brussels: avenues of human flesh! When rope is lacking, and when they cannot even steal more, they try grapeshot; when powder is scarce, they resort to drowning! When the rivers choke, they burn the victims! This is winter—they must make use of their opportunities—the garrison must be kept warm!

LA TR. Horrible!

RYS. And all this because we, the citizens of Flanders, are unwilling to be subjects of the King of Spain, who is for us nothing but the Duc de Brabant. Nor do we wish to be judged by the frightful Inquisition! Because we, the rightful heirs of those franchises and privileges which our forefathers won at the price of their life's blood, will not allow ourselves to be outraged by this double-faced and perjured king, who with his hand on the Holy Scripture, before God and man, swore to protect these rights and privileges! Because we want no other faith than that which is right according to our

consciences, nor other soldiers than our own! Because, in short, we are a free-born people, who refuse, so long as there remains a single drop of Flemish blood in our Flemish veins, to remain the slaves of a despot, an inhuman soldier, and an ambitious monk!

LA TR. Spoken like a gentleman! You are right! I have no idea what Fate has in store for us, you and me, but if we escape alive, here are two strong arms and a loyal heart at your service!

RYS. Many thanks, Monsieur le Marquis! But there is no doubt as to what will happen to us: you will be freed, I put to death.

LA TR. Why?

RYS. I do not know the reason. For instance, I may be accused of having left the city in defiance of the edict forbidding one to pass the gates without official permission from the Duke of Alba.

LA TR. So there is an edict—forbidding that?

RYS. And seventeen others, each with the simplest of penalties for infringement; in every case death.

LA TR. For this, too?

RYS. Yes, for this.

LA TR. Frightful!

RYS. This is the government under which we

exist, Monsieur le Marquis, and have existed since the Duke of Alba annulled all our laws and imposed on their ruin his infamous court. He calls it the Court of Troubles; we call it the Court of Blood. And worse—do you see that placard, the brown and yellow one, over there, on the pillar? [*He points to the first pillar to the left.*]

LA TR. Yes.

RYS. This is what it contains (I had to read it three times in order to believe my eyes): “In the name of the Holy Church and of the King, the Duke of Alba, the commander-general, it is decreed: All the inhabitants”—(*all*, mark you, all the inhabitants of the Netherlands)—“without distinction of rank, age, or sex, are condemned to death as heretics!”

LA TR. *All* the inhabitants?

RYS. *All*—three millions of men condemned with one scrape of the pen!

LA TR. [*going to the left in order to read the placard*]. This is madness!

RYS. Yes, but how expeditious! No more cross-questioning, no witnesses! Every man who is arrested may be executed on a moment's notice: he is condemned in advance.

LA TR. Monsieur le Comte, are we in the Netherlands, or is this hell?

RYS. Ah! King Philip has chosen the right man! This insane and melancholy king needed a fanatical and bloodthirsty servant—a man whose face is the only human thing about him. No! He is a father, and a good father. He has a daughter whom he idolizes. She is ill and is slowly dying—*he* is desperate. The air even of her native Spain could not prolong the days of the poor child, and the air of Brussels, so dark and humid, hastens her end. And this father—how sure is God's vengeance!—this father in despair only aggravates his daughter's malady! These massacres, these unspeakable horrors, are breaking the girl's heart. She is good and charitable; her despair is killing her! What a heavenly chastisement, striking the father through his child! Each blow he delivers is a deathblow at his daughter's heart; the more he kills—the monster!—the nearer she approaches to her death!

LA TR. And this nation allows itself to perish as that girl is perishing, through laziness and torpor! Have not these three million men, condemned as one, thrown themselves on this madman and torn him to pieces?

RYS. Patience! The time is near—revolution is growing in the upper provinces—we have command of nearly all the coast. William de la Marck has entered the harbor of La Brielle; the province of Utrecht refused to pay its taxes, and is now secretly arming. Overburdened with debts, at the end of his resources, stripped of the subsidies he expected from Spain by the English pirates, the Duke has just raised the taxes again, and a wave of horror and hatred runs through the Netherlands: it means ruin to the entire nation! Let the Prince of Orange, our saviour, our God, once make up for his setback at Jemmingen and gain one victory over the Spaniards—behold, the rebellion breaks forth, enveloping and devouring the oppressors!

LA TR. Monsieur le Conite, I shall be ready to take any part!

RYS. Ah! Monsieur, shall *I* live that long?

[*Roll of drums in the distance.*]

The drums we hear may be those of the Grand Provost and his worthy acolytes!

[*He goes to the right.*]

LA TR. [*following him*]. Is it the Grand Provost who will decide our fate?

RYS. Yes—Noircarmes, a vile brute, who has well

deserved by his exploits the nickname of Butcher! Delrio, an insane fanatic, more stupid than wicked, is with him; and Vargas, secretary of the council, a nasty fellow who was forced to leave Spain after violating a young girl whose tutor he was; he is acquiring a fortune here by confiscation and robbery.

LA TR. And of these three scoundrels not one, I dare say, is a gentleman?

RYS. No.

LA TR. Good! I shall use language fitting to their station!

[The noise of the drums sounds nearer.]

RYS. Here they come, Monsieur le Marquis. This may be our last hour. Will you let me give you some advice?

LA TR. I beg you——

RYS. If you are questioned about your religious beliefs, conceal the fact that you are Calvinist! If you were discovered it might mean the forfeiture of your life.

LA TR. Monsieur le Comte, if I gave you the same advice, would you act on it?

RYS. No!

LA TR. Then allow me to imitate you in one re-

spect—that is the only way I can accomplish my duty.

RYS. [*grasping LA TRÉMOÏLLE's hands*]. You are right, Monsieur. God save you!

[*The beat of drums is heard in the street. All the soldiers, women, etc., reënter, station themselves about, awaiting the arrival of the court; some crowd the benches, other various articles of furniture, carts, etc. The stage, all except the centre, is filled with soldiers, who have run in from all sides. Four of the Provost's Guards, two of them carrying torches, precede NOIRCARMES; the torch-bearers go to the left and station themselves around the fire. The other two, sword in hand, put the crowd into place. Enter NOIRCARMES, VARGAS, and DELRIO, followed by two clerks of the court and more soldiers, who carry drawn swords.*]

NOIRCARMES [*brutally, as he enters*]. It's cold as the devil here! Wood! [*He approaches the fire, left.*]

SOLDIERS [*up-stage*]. Wood!

VARGAS [*also going to the fire*]. Light torches, too! We shan't be able to see a thing in a few minutes.

MIG. Torches!

SOLDIERS [*outside*]. Torches!

DELRIO [*going to the table*]. Come, let's waste no time! We almost froze at the Jacobins'!

NOIR. Where is Captain Rincon?

MIG. At the Town Hall, Monseigneur, in order to disarm the Civil Guard!

NOIR. Very good! And, by the way, this Karloo Van der Noot been found?

RYS. [*quivering, aside*]. Karloo! Good God! what do these wretches want with him? [*He listens with an air of anxiety.*]

MIG. Monseigneur, Karloo was not at home.

VARGAS [*warming his feet*]. Who is this Karloo?

NOIR. [*going to the right of the table in order to sit in the place first occupied by RINCON*]. Former trumpeter of Monsieur d'Egmont, at the battle of Gravelines—very suspicious character!

DELRIO. Calvinist?

NOIR. No, a Catholic, but not a jot better than a Calvinist. When he was captain of the Civil Guard he received an order to disarm his whole company within twenty-four hours; he did nothing whatsoever about it! [*He sits down.*]

DELRIO [*above the table*]. That looks very suspicious.

VARGAS. Miguel, send a soldier at once to the

captain with the following order: "Karloos is granted the right to take the weapons from his company to the Town Hall. If, however, at seven o'clock in the morning we lack a single musket, at a quarter-past he will have an opportunity at a distance of ten feet from the ground of meditating on the advantages of exactitude."

[*The soldiers laugh.*]

NOIR. [*in an undertone*]. It might be wise to begin at that point!

VARGAS [*in an undertone, sitting down, left*]. Yes, but we should not then have the muskets. There is always time later!

RYS. [*drawing a free breath*]. He is saved!

LA TR. [*in a whisper*]. Until to-morrow!

RYS. [*likewise in a whisper, hopefully*]. Oh, to-morrow!

LA TR. Really, Monsieur, you trembled much more for him than for yourself!

RYS. I did, for I love him as a brother—I might say like a child!

NOIR. Let us begin now, Miguel. [*At a signal from DELRIO, the clerks lay the registers on the table, where they have already placed inkstands and pens.*]
How many prisoners are here?

MIG. Excellency, a hundred and fifty—and close-packed!

NOIR. Let us enlighten them! [*The soldiers laugh. To DELRIO.*] Has Your Grace the papers?

DELRIO. Here!

NOIR. [*to MIGUEL*]. Proceed—and quickly!

[The soldiers have filled the benches; others sit around the bases of the pillars and on the tables. The stage is so crowded that scarcely anything of the men can be seen but their heads. Night falls; the stage is lighted only by the flickering torches and the reflections from many hearths. A prisoner, dressed in black, is brought forward from the back, right.]

VARGAS [*looking over the documents which he and DELRIO have received from the clerks*]. Who is this fellow?

MIG. [*to the prisoner*]. What's your name?

PRISONER. Balthazar Cuyp.

NOIR. Profession?

PRISONER [*simply*]. Pastor.

[Murmurs from the soldiers.]

DELRIO. Very well! This simplifies matters!

NOIR. Good! [*To MIGUEL*]. Take him away!

SOLDIERS. Death! Death!

MIG. Hang him!

NOIR. Yes.

MIG. Monseigneur, we have no more rope!

DELRIO. Then shoot him.

VARGAS [*his nose buried among the documents*].
Don't waste powder. Burn him with the others—
that's the simplest way. Wood costs nothing.

NOIR. You are right! Away with him to the
Jacobins'!

MIG. To the Jacobins'!

[*The soldiers open their ranks and allow CUYF
to pass; then close them at once, left, as they
shout: "Death! Death!"*]

Next!

[*The soldiers bring forward an old man.*]

NOIR. Who is this?

DELRIO [*looking at a document*]. Goberstraet from
Naerden.

OLD MAN [*trembling*]. Pity me, Monseigneur.
I'm a poor, harmless old man. I'm a father—I have
a family. Pity me!

NOIR. [*To DELRIO*]. What is the charge?

DELRIO. Protested against the latest tax.

OLD MAN. I meant no harm, Monseigneur. Pity
me!

NOIR. [*pointing to the placard on the pillar*]. Haven't you read the edict—article nine?

OLD MAN. Have mercy!

[*He disappears as the first prisoner did, amid the derision of the soldiers.*]

NOIR. Next!

[*A child of fourteen, who struggles with his guards, is brought forward. The soldiers have to drag him along on his knees.*]

DELRIO. A child?

MIG. Josuah Koppestock.

VARGAS. Refused to take off his cap as the procession passed.

[*Murmurs in the crowd.*]

CHILD [*terror-stricken*]. Have pity, Monseigneur, I'm so young!

NOIR. All the more reason—if we allowed these children to grow up as rebels! [*To the soldiers.*] Take him away!

CHILD [*breaking loose from his two guards, and clasping NOIRCARMES's knee, then his arm*]. Monseigneur, have pity on me—pardon me!

NOIR. [*casting him off*]. Take him away! If we listened to them, they would all be innocent! Take him off at once!

CHILD [*still struggling with the guards, who finally take him off*]. Pity me! Help! Let me be! Help! Mother! Mamma! Mamma! [*He disappears as the others have done, crying out as he goes.*]

LA TR. [*aside to RYSOOR*]. This waiting is fearful, Monsieur; it tears my heart!

RYS. [*also aside*]. Poor child—and the mother!

LA TR. Are you married, Monsieur le Comte!

RYS. Alas, Monsieur: to a wife whom I adore!

LA TR. Courage, Monsieur!

VARGAS. Now, the next! Hurry up! We're freezing!

[*The soldiers laugh brutally as JONAS is brought forward.*]

RYS. [*nervously*]. Ah, the bellringer! Poor devil! How does he happen to be here?

NOIR. Come forward! [*He takes the documents from VARGAS.*]

VARGAS. Battery and assault on a soldier.

NOIR. [*to JONAS*]. Your name is Jonas?

JONAS. Yes, Monseigneur. I'm also called "L'Enflé,"* but I don't insist on that!

[*The soldiers laugh.*]

DELRIO [*smiling*]. Fine face! Ha!

* "Blockhead."

NOIR. [*also smiling*]. Yes. What do you do, my friend?

JONAS [*confidently*]. Just now, Monseigneur, I spend my time objecting to things as they are, but a year ago, before the Duke of Alba came, I was bell-ringer of the Town Hall.

NOIR. Ah, you're the bellringer? Good! You live in the belfry?

JONAS. Yes, Monseigneur, with my wife and little ones. They left me my lodgings on the main floor, after they'd stopped the ringing of the bells for service!

VARGAS. Yes—and you are now lodging Cortadilla the trumpeter at your place, are you not?

[CORTADILLA *advances and makes a military salute.*]

JONAS. Yes, Monseigneur—unfortunately.

VARGAS. Well, the trumpeter Cortadilla, who is present, complains that he has suffered many humiliations at your hands.

JONAS. He *is* deprived of some things, Monseigneur—my wine! He drank the whole cellar dry!

[*The soldiers laugh.*]

NOIR. You should count yourself lucky, Maître Jonas, to be allowed to quench the thirst of one of His Catholic Majesty's servants! Especially when

he is the victim of such an infirmity: for he is dumb, you know—ever since the battle of Saint-Quentin.

JONAS. Yes, Monseigneur, he told me about that—a bullet that cut off half his tongue.

NOIR. Well, then——

JONAS. A very unfortunate accident! What an awful tragedy! What a talker he must have been before the battle! But now it's much worse—you can't understand a damned word he says—he explains himself with his trumpet! He plays certain calls to tell the various circumstances of his life: one to announce that he is ready for meals; one means he wants soup; one for more wine, and I know *that* one! Why, we lead a dog's life, Monseigneur! He comes home at one in the morning! [*He imitates the call of a trumpet.*] Ta ra ta ta ta! That means: "Open the door!" I get up—then he goes to bed; no sooner do I drop off to sleep than—[*He again imitates the call, sadly.*]—Ta ra ta ta ta! He's sick! Again I get up and help him. I get no more sleep that night. All that's not so bad, but what do you think? This morning he took it into his head to invent a new call! [*Once more he imitates a call, this time allegro.*] Ta ra ta ta ta! D'you know what that means?

NOIR. No—what?

JONAS. “Have Madame Jonas come up to my room at once! I must speak to her!” [*The soldiers laugh.*] I pretended not to hear! Then a louder call. I got angry—then we quarrelled; but, what the devil, he always has the last word with his trumpet! I’m damned if I take the rascal back!

VARGAS. By the way, Maître Jonas, I notice here that there are serious reports about you.

JONAS. Lord in Heaven! About me?

VARGAS. Yes, on account of your opinions.

JONAS. My belfry gives me the only opinions I ever have.

VARGAS. Exactly! Well, your belfry is under suspicion!

JONAS. My belfry!

VARGAS. It is suspected of belonging to the rebels.

JONAS. It never says anything!

VARGAS. Because it cannot; but every one knows that, if it weren’t muffled, it would play only Flemish airs—music which is hostile to the King!

JONAS. But——

NOIR. [*brutally*]. That’s enough! How many bells are there in your belfry?

JONAS [*intimidated*]. Three, Monseigneur: the big one, called Roland; then there's Jacqueline, and Jeanneton. They're for holidays, when the people used to have good times.

DELRIO. You have been ordered to sever all the ropes from these bells.

JONAS. That's been done—and even the stairs leading up to the first landing have been smashed.

NOIR. Good! But that is not enough! You were also ordered to play Spanish instead of Flemish melodies. Have you done that?

JONAS. I've tried to, Monseigneur, but my bells can't change so easily; they're terribly stubborn.

VARGAS. I think the clown is making game of us!

DELRIO [*aside*]. Yes; but, you see, he's the only man in the city who can ring the bells! We'll hang him later!

NOIR. Master Bellringer, we give you exactly forty-eight hours in which to transform your Flemish belfry into a good Spanish one, faithful to the King and the Church! Don't forget it! Now go!

[JONAS *is about to leave.*]

VARGAS. One more word! You referred a moment ago, my friend, to the days when people had a

good time. This is *Mardi-gras*—the time when people should be gay——

JONAS. Well, you see——

VARGAS. You clown, in the days when you lived in disorder and anarchy your life was one series of festivals and debauchery; now that the city is filled with soldiers in order to maintain discipline, you pretend to be downcast! There's not a mask in the streets; and on a holiday of this sort, too—not even a drunken reveller!

JONAS [*pointing to CORTADILLA*]. I beg your pardon—there's the trumpeter!

[*Laughs in the crowd.*]

NOIR. Ah, I had forgotten! Trumpeter Cortadilla, give your arm to this ape; then decorate his head with feathers, or give him a mask—do anything you like—then walk around with him, from wine shop to wine shop, and gather as many comrades as you can! He will bear all expenses—and set an example! Go now, and enjoy yourselves!

JONAS [*as CORTADILLA takes his arm*]. Only too happy, Monseigneur—too happy! At least don't let him play his old trumpet!

SOLDIERS [*laughing*]. Yes! Yes! Yes!

NOIR. You're mistaken—that will add to the festivities [*as JONAS is being taken off*].

JONAS. That is too much pleasure at one time!

[*They go out arm in arm, while the soldiers laugh.*]

RYS. [*to LA TRÉMOÏLLE*]. Well, the poor man got off easily!

NOIR. Next!

MIG. It's a woman!

[*There is a movement in the crowd. A woman is brought in.*]

NOIR. Name?

DELRIO [*reading a document which is handed to him*]. Sarah Mathisoon—killed Spanish soldiers——

[*Threatening murmurs among the soldiers.*]

NOIR. [*to the woman*]. Have you killed soldiers?

WOMAN. I've killed ten!

SOLDIERS. Death! She's a sorceress! Kill her! Death!

NOIR. Silence! What the devil!

WOMAN. Bellow, you beasts!

NOIR. Why did you kill them?

WOMAN. Do *you* ask me why? I'll tell you! I'm a country woman—your soldiers broke into our house—they pillaged, stole, got drunk! When they

drank all they could they beat my husband to death. They roasted my son alive, in order to make him confess where we had hidden our gold! Drunk with blood, they took my pure and innocent daughter, a girl of sixteen, threw her about from one to the other—for fun, they said—until she died of shame and anger! And I was praying, calling to God, who is deaf! He didn't do a thing! *There is no God!*

ALL [*revolted at the idea*]. Oh! Oh!

WOMAN [*turning to the soldiers*]. No, there *is no* God! You are highway robbers and brutes! Why does He let you behave as you do? He doesn't avenge our wrongs. *I had to do it! I myself! I made them all drink, more and more, so much that they fell down dead drunk. I locked every door and window of the house, and set it on fire, and burned them all! Burned them alive, and heard them howl inside! I regret only one thing: that they died too soon, and that all of you were not with them, so that I could tear your hearts to pieces with my fingernails, and gnaw them with my teeth—you devils!*

SOLDIERS [*furiously*]. She's blaspheming! Death! Drown the sorceress!

NOIR. [*to VARGAS and DELRIO*]. Suppose we give her over to them?

VARGAS. Good!

NOIR. We'll give her to you! Take her away!

[The soldiers, with joyful cries, seize her. A bell rings, and the drums beat.]

VARGAS *[standing up with NOIRCARMES and DELRIO]*. The Angelus!

[The soldiers fall to their knees. There is silence as the bell continues striking.]

RYS. *[who stands without taking his hat off; to LA TRÉMOÏLLE in an undertone]*. Please, please, Marquis, take off your hat!

LA TR. *[aside to RYSOOR]*. Will you take off yours, Monsieur le Comte?

RYS. No!

LA TR. Then I shall keep on mine!

[The Angelus ceases striking. The soldiers rise as the drum beats, and take the shrieking woman away.]

SOLDIERS. Drown her! Drown her!

WOMAN *[as she is carried out]*. Cut-throats! Kill me, torture me! You can't have back the lives of the men I killed!

RYS. *[aside]*. What frightful torture! Will this never end? My God!

NOIR. *[who, together with DELRIO has reseated him-*

self]. Let us make haste, Messieurs; it is nearly night already. [*Catching sight of RYSOOR.*] Who is that over there?

MIG. Monseigneur, a citizen who has just been arrested. A spy has reported him.

NOIR. What is his name?

RYs. [*advancing toward NOIRCARMES*]. My name is Count de Rysoor!

VARGAS [*who has been standing in order to warm his feet, suddenly turning round*]. The Count de Rysoor? [*To NOIRCARMES.*] I have certain notes regarding this prisoner, who deserves special attention. [*To RYSOOR.*] Was not Your Grace one of the chief officers of the city under the Queen Regent?

RYs. I was so honored, and Madame la Régente deigned to receive me at her councils.

DELRIO. Then we should have no reason to wonder that matters turned out so badly in her time.

VARGAS [*at the table, about to sit down*]. You are charged with having attended the celebrated banquet at the Hôtel de Culembourg!

RYs. Yes, Monsieur.

VARGAS. You confess to having worn the costume of the Queen's family—the Wallet and Shield—insignia of the revolt against royal authority?

RYS. I beg to differ: I am emphatically opposed to senseless buffoonery, and have given my opinion to Monsieur de Bréderode, who agrees with the Prince of Orange.

VARGAS [*sitting down*]. Good! Let us speak of the Prince of Orange! You are accused of being a friend of his!

RYS. I am his childhood friend, Monsieur—one of his most faithful friends.

NOIR. Of that rebel?

DELRIO. Heretic?

RYS. He lives according to the dictates of his conscience. Happy the man who can lay his head on the pillow without having obeyed another master!

VARGAS. Your being simply a friend is not so important; you are cited as his accomplice. You are here to clear yourself of that suspicion.

RYS. If your Excellencies will be good enough to let me hear of what I am accused, I shall answer.

VARGAS [*to whom MIGUEL has given a note*]. You are charged, Monsieur le Comte, with having disappeared and been absent from this city for a period of four days. The object of this sojourn was an interview with William the Silent.

RYS. Who makes that charge?

VARGAS [*pointing to a spy, who comes forward to the right*]. This man! Tell him what you know.

SPY. I know that Monsieur le Comte left his home Saturday at noon, and only returned to-day, Tuesday, after Vespers.

RYS. That fellow is a groom who was discharged from my service for theft! For the accomplishment of his base profession he gets six sous a day from headquarters. If I were to ask him to lay his hand on the Holy Scriptures and swear I had never left my door, I should merely have to offer him twelve.

[The soldiers laugh; their jeers serve as accompaniment to the spy's exit.]

NOIR. Silence! [*The spy disappears.*] Here is another proof: the clerk of the court presented himself at your home yesterday, Monday, during the afternoon—you were not there.

RYS. How was I to know he was coming?

VARGAS. Very well; but when your wife was questioned she was very much embarrassed, and answered that you had gone out!

RYS. Well, so I had!

VARGAS. Very good; but you must prove that you were at home when the curfew rang!

RYS. Let your Excellencies ask me to give you proof of that by a witness!

NOIR. You will have a chance of doing that, and easily. You are, as a rich merchant, lodging a Spanish officer at your home.

RYS. Yes; Captain Rincon and three soldiers.

NOIR. [*to MIGUEL*]. Have Captain Rincon brought at once. [*Soldiers run out.*] Your Grace may be seated. If the captain's statement does not constitute sure proof that you were at home last night, then your absence is a certainty, and you may as well confess to the other charges!

[*During the following dialogue NOIRCARMES, VARGAS, and DELRIO sign documents.*]

RYS. God's will be done! [*He returns to his place.*]

LA TR. [*in an undertone*]. Well, that's over! Let us not lose hope!

RYS. [*aside, quickly*]. Monsieur le Marquis, I am a dead man!

LA TR. Good God! is that so? Did you leave the city?

RYS. For four days! The captain will swear I was away. I haven't a quarter of an hour to live!

LA TR. Ah, Monsieur le Comte!

RYS. Monsieur, every minute is numbered. I have a cruel favor to ask of you.

LA TR. With all my heart!

RYS. If you ever escape from this hell, as I sincerely hope you will, go to the Place du Grand-Marché, where I live, see the Countess de Rysoor, and tell her what they have done to me.

LA TR. I give you my word of honor, I will do it.

RYS. Break the news gently, you understand? Do not tell it bluntly, but come gradually to the point. Although I may appear ridiculous to you, Monsieur le Comte, with my gray hair, I love my wife with the passion of a youth of twenty; and if I show any weakness now it is not the soldier who trembles, but the husband who fears the separation to come, and who does not consider it cowardly to shed a tear at the thought of lost happiness.

LA TR. You may rely on me, Monsieur. But doubtless your errand from the city was for a purpose—there was some secret plan?

RYS. Yes.

LA TR. Well, treat me as a friend, please; I beg you, and if I can help——

RYS. Many thanks! But before I was arrested, thank God, I had taken the necessary precautions!

LA TR. Good!

RYs. I shall not be saved, but I shall be avenged!

MIG. Captain Rincon!

Enter CAPTAIN RINCON.

NOIR. Step forward, Captain Rincon. Do you live with the Count de Rysoor? With that person?

RIN. Yes, Monseigneur, together with three of my men.

NOIR. Since when?

RIN. Since the Sunday of the Purification—last week.

VARGAS. Good! Have you noticed during these past four days that Monsieur de Rysoor was at home?

RIN. Yesterday, during the day, Monseigneur—he was not.

[The soldiers show interest.]

VARGAS, DELRIO, and NOIRCARMES *[triumphantly]*.
Last night?

[RYSOOR moves about.]

RIN. Yes, Monsieur le Prévôt—yes, last night he was home!

VARGAS. Think well, Rincon—are you positive? Last night, you say, you saw Monsieur de Rysoor—the man who sits over there?

RIN. I am positive. I fought with him!

[*General excitement.*]

RYS. [*aside, and greatly surprised*]. With me?

NOIR. Explain!

RIN. Last night, Messieurs, I had dined extremely well, and when I came home, my head was heavy! Not a light to be seen! I went upstairs, striking each stair with the end of my sword. All of a sudden some one comes running out of Monsieur le Comte's room. A lady is holding a light for him—he pushes against me! “Who's there?” I shout. “Who's there, yourself? Can't I leave my own room?” I draw my sword and raise it. Monsieur le Comte snatches it from me, throws it downstairs, and shouts to me: “Drunkard!” and then disappears! “Drunkard” I couldn't swallow, you know, though I *was* drunk; and then I saw I was in the wrong to maltreat the head of the house, so I went calmly to sleep on the stairs.

VARGAS. Have you heard, Monsieur le Comte?

LA TR. [*to RYSOOR*]. Monsieur, you are being spoken to!

RYS. [*making an effort*]. Yes, Monsieur, I hear.

NOIR. Is the story true?

RYS. [*making an effort to appear calm*]. In every detail.

VARGAS. Then *you* were the man?

RYS. [*standing up, very pale*]. Who *could* have been coming from my room at such a time if not I myself? Did the captain doubt it for an instant?

RIN. Not for a second.

RYS. Your Excellencies now see that I *was* at home last night!

DELRIO. We must believe it.

NOIR. [*to VARGAS*]. What do you think?

VARGAS [*in an undertone*]. Let us close the case! We shall be able to get him again.

DELRIO. Let us have supper!

NOIR. Yes, we've done enough to-day! [*The soldiers move about.*] Monsieur le Comte, you are free!

[NOIRCARMES, DELRIO, and VARGAS rise, and
the soldiers prepare to escort them.]

LA TR. [*to RYSOOR, aloud and joyfully*]. Saved, Monsieur!

NOIR. [*noticing LA TRÉMOÏLLE*]. Wait! Who is that?

LA TR. [*nonchalantly*]. Oh, I beg you not to trouble about me!

NOIR. I beg your pardon?

LA TR. Nothing. I am not worth it! Good heavens, let us have supper!

NOIR. Well, well, who are you?

LA TR. Less than nothing: Marquis de la Trémoille!

VARGAS. Monsieur de la Trémoille!

[*All take off their hats.*]

NOIR. Taken prisoner at Jemmingen!

LA TR. Of course!

VARGAS. And here?

LA TR. [*jokingly*]. As you see!

NOIR. Monsieur le Marquis, I might have you executed this moment.

LA TR. [*gayly*]. Oh, you wouldn't think of doing that!

NOIR. I beg your pardon?

LA TR. [*as before*]. I say no! Come, let us reason: at this precise moment I am worth a hundred thousand crowns—the price of my ransom! Dead, I should not be worth a sou! The Duke of Alba knows more than to kill a hundred thousand good crowns in flesh and blood, belonging to him!

DELRIO. That is true, and yet——

LA TR. [*lowering his voice*]. Especially as you have no money!

VARGAS. But——

LA TR. [*gayly*]. You haven't, have you? I know the state of your finances!

DELRIO. Monsieur!

LA TR. [*as before, but speaking naturally*]. One word more, Monsieur: if I shout to your soldiers that you have no money to pay them their next month's wages——

NOIR. [*quickly*]. Monsieur le Marquis——

LA TR. [*as before*]. You see? Go and have your supper, Messieurs; go, I beg you. Give my best compliments to the Duke of Alba!

NOIR. Monsieur le Marquis will present them in person, for he will kindly follow me to the Palace.

LA TR. Ha! Ha!

NOIR. Whether Monsieur le Marquis is willing or not!

LA TR. Very well, Messieurs, but on one condition: that *you follow me*, for I will march ahead!

NOIR. Monsieur le Marquis——

LA TR. [*with dignity and determination*]. Monsieur! At the Court of France the family of La Trémoille walks directly after the King. I did not come to Brussels to do honor to the Grand Provost of Brabant.

VARGAS [*impatiently*]. Do as you please, Monsieur le Marquis, only let us go!

LA TR. Very well. [*He turns round and sees soldiers barring his way*]. Have these fellows make way for us—I dislike the rabble! [*He comes to RY-SOOR.*] Monsieur le Comte, my heartiest regards. I shall look forward with extreme impatience to seeing you again! [*To NOIRCARMES, DELRIO, and VARGAS, as he puts on his hat.*] Messieurs, you may follow me!

[*He precedes them out, to the beat of drums. The soldiers take up their torches again. The crowd gradually disperses, until scarcely any one but the sentinels at the back are to be seen. The stage lies in partial obscurity.*]

RY-S. [*recovering from the shock he has suffered, and crossing the stage. To RINCON, who looks after the departing soldiers*]. Captain! Captain! One word, if you please!

RIN. [*coming toward RY-SOOR*]. At Your Grace's service!

RY-S. [*scanning RINCON anxiously*]. You have just saved my life, Monsieur, but you must admit that your generosity led you to—to modify the facts a little?

RIN. I told only the truth. Your Grace knows that!

rys. [*still nervous*]. No, I do not know that! [RINCON *shows surprise*.] I beg your pardon, Captain, I've been so disturbed since my arrest! Now, let me see! Remember, you were drunk—you admitted that—then it was night, and very dark! You might imagine a thousand things under those circumstances.

RIN. Now, now, I think I'm able to——

rys. Even I—I myself—I am not very sure that it was I who left that room—the one you mentioned!

RIN. *Your* room it was, by God! You sent me down those stairs quickly enough! My sore shoulder would remind me, even if my memory failed.

rys. But that woman who held the light—are you sure——

RIN. Now you are making fun of me, Monsieur le Marquis! I saw Madame la Comtesse as plainly as I see you at this moment. I can still hear you saying: “Come back, Madame! Come back at once and be careful!”

rys. I said that?

RIN. Those are the very words!

rys. And then did the door close?

RIN. At once! Now do you understand?

RYS. Yes! Thank you, Monsieur, thank you!

RIN. No ill-feeling? Oh! shake hands!

RYS. Shake hands?

RIN. Yes. That was an awful cut you got from the sword you took from me!

RYS. Oh, yes, I——

RIN. And the way you shrieked! When I picked up my sword it was covered with blood!

RYS. Ah, yes!

RIN. The right hand. [*He points to RYSOOR's right hand, which is gloved*].

RYS. Yes.

RIN. It will trouble you for two or three days.

RYS. Possibly.

RIN. As a matter of fact, we should have shown it as additional proof to their Excellencies.

RYS. It's only a trifle.

RIN. But an indisputable proof!

[*He goes up-stage.*]

RYS. [*quickly*]. Yes!

RIN. [*returning to RYSOOR*]. I beg your pardon?

[*The night patrol is heard off the back of the stage.*]

RYS. Nothing! Good-bye, Captain.

RIN. Ah, here is the patrol! [*Turning to the right as he cries out.*] Close your gates!

VOICE OF MIGUEL [*in the distance*]. Close your gates!

DISTANT VOICES. Close your gates!

RIN. Monsieur le Comte, it is time to close for the night. Go home, and do not stay around the streets. You are now out of trouble.

[*He goes up-stage.*

RYS. [*aside, greatly distressed*]. Out of trouble! Ha! There is no end to my trouble—it is only beginning now! [*He makes his way slowly up-stage.*

RIN. [*at the back*]. Put up the chains!

VOICES OF SOLDIERS [*in the distance*]. Put up the chains!

VOICES [*at a greater distance*]. Put up the chains!

Curtain.

ACT II

ACT II

SCENE I: *In RYSOOR's home. The scene represents a Flemish interior; it is a large room, richly but severely decorated. Everywhere are life-size wood carvings; the walls are hung with tapestries. The ceiling is wainscoted. Down-stage to the left is a small door; halfway up-stage on the same side is the large and principal entrance to the room; at the back, a little to the left of the centre, is a huge fireplace in which a fire is burning. Up-stage to the right is an arched Renaissance window, obliquely situated, and of stained glass; this opens upon the Place de l'Hôtel-de-Ville, which can be seen outside by the light of the moon. Down-stage to the right is a Flemish chest which is loaded with rich plate and jewels. To the left is a table, with chairs on either side, and a high tabouret in front of it. To the right is a Flemish bench with room for two persons. As the curtain rises GUDULE and the Majordomo are present.*

MAJORDOMO [*standing on the threshold of the dining-room*]. Has Madame la Comtesse not returned from service this evening?

GUDULE [*who is engaged in arranging things at the right of the stage*]. I think this is she.

[*The door opens and DOLORÈS enters, crosses the stage, takes off her mantle, and lays down her Book of Hours. After a pause, during which GUDULE lays the mantle aside on a chair to the right of the fireplace, DOLORÈS speaks.*]

DOLORÈS. Has Monsieur Karloo come yet?

GUDULE. No, Madame.

MAJORDOMO. Has Madame la Comtesse any orders to give for the supper?

DOLORÈS. What time is it?

MAJORDOMO. Just eight, Madame.

DOLORÈS. No. Serve it later! Leave me now!

GUDULE. Madame—Monsieur Karloo!

DOLORÈS [*joyfully*]. At last!

Enter KARLOO.

KARLOO [*who is pale and nervous, crosses the stage and kisses DOLORÈS' hand. In an undertone*]. Send away the servants!

DOLORÈS [*also in an undertone*]. What has happened? Why are you so pale?

KARLOO [*in a whisper*]. I must see you alone for an instant! For God's sake, only an instant!

DOLORÈS [*also in a whisper*]. I can't—at this time! They would suspect!

KARLOO [*as before*]. Do send them away!

DOLORÈS. Gudule!

GUDULE. Madame?

DOLORÈS. Lay the cloth!

[GUDULE and the Majordomo go out, leaving open one side of the double-door, while KARLOO lays his cape and hat on the bench which is under the window.]

DOLORÈS [*showing anxiety**]. Are you hurt? What is that wound? Your hand?†

KARLOO. Nothing at all!

DOLORÈS. May I see it? Show me!

KARLOO [*showing his hand, which is gloved*]. Yes, you *can* see it—but who would guess?

DOLORÈS. That soldier?

* There is an author's note here to the effect that "this part of the scene is played in an undertone, while each of the speakers appears to be on his guard."—TRANSLATOR.

† She uses the familiar—"tu"—form; they employ this throughout the play.

KARLOO. The drunkard. *He* doesn't remember!
No, that is not what troubles me!

DOLORÈS [*nervously*]. What then?

KARLOO [*with an effort*]. *He* is back!

DOLORÈS [*quickly*]. No!

KARLOO. Yes. Galèna has seen him.

DOLORÈS. He has not come home yet!

KARLOO. No, but he is in the city—I know that!

DOLORÈS [*sitting down, after a pause*]. Well, we might have expected that, might we not?

KARLOO [*looking at her with a kind of terror in his face*]. Dolorès, you say that as if you had hoped that he would never return!

DOLORÈS. Don't you wish——

KARLOO [*quickly*]. May God strike me if I ever harbored so horrible a thought!

DOLORÈS. To tell you the truth, I'm in despair—I'm disgusted—at the idea of his return! God should never have allowed it!

KARLOO [*sitting down near her*]. God?

DOLORÈS. Yes, God! That man is a traitor!

KARLOO. How do you know that?

DOLORÈS. Ah, what I know! Do you think he can deceive me by telling me he is going away on

business? And when he goes out at night, or to the Porte de Louvain, to attend Protestant service?

KARLOO. He?

DOLORÈS. I am telling you what he says! You know nothing of it, of course! You are a Catholic, like me! And he would not be likely to choose you for a confidant, and tell you of his apostasy! But I tell you he goes every other day to the place I mentioned. For three months he has been going. Once I followed him, without his knowing it.

KARLOO [*nervously*]. Did you do that?

DOLORÈS. Yes, I did!

KARLOO. And why do you imagine that this latest journey of his——

DOLORÈS [*interrupting him*]. These people, for instance, who keep coming all the time to inquire about his return! And see how careful he is to keep secret the fact that he is away! And the fact that he *has* gone away, at the risk of his life! And his beliefs, finally, which perhaps he doesn't confide to you, who are not a rebel. But *I* see. I can penetrate even his silences. Now, for instance, the other week, when you saved Doña Rafaële from the howling mob that tried to avenge itself on the Duke of Alba through his daughter—how did he receive the

news of that? He merely said: "You did your duty!" A true brother in the cause would have taken you in his arms! I assure you, my woman's instinct is not mistaken! And how could he do anything but hate the Duke of Alba? A Calvinist! Traitor to his God, traitor to his King! Ha! And I am also positive that that man is conspiring——

KARLOO [*suddenly springing up*]. Not another word, you—— What if we should be overheard? [*As he looks toward the door, he goes behind the back of the chair.*]

DOLORÈS [*oblivious of KARLOO's demand*]. It makes little difference!

KARLOO. It would mean death to him—and others, too!

DOLORÈS. What others? You are not one of his band, are you?

KARLOO [*quickly*]. What an idea!

DOLORÈS. Then what do I care for the others? And for him, above all? Then we could love one another. It would be no crime *then*!

KARLOO. That wish is another crime!

DOLORÈS. Isn't living as we live worse than anything else? And, more, a horrible torture?

KARLOO. My God! yes.

DOLORÈS. Well, then? [*There is a pause. KARLOO is standing with his elbows on the back of the chair, his head resting on his hands.*] Well, we must decide, must we not? This cannot go on! What shall we do?

KARLOO. What we have been doing: lie, lie, and then lie!

DOLORÈS. Don't you find that disgusting? Is it not hateful that we don't dare talk during the day with that door standing open, for fear of being spied upon? Even the night brings its dangers—last night, for instance!

KARLOO. Oh, the thought is always with me!

DOLORÈS. What an awful ordeal is the return of this man! Think of it! Oh, I love you! I am yours! [*She rises and goes to the left.*]

KARLOO. Dolorès!

DOLORÈS. You don't care whether he comes back or not! What harm can it do you, after all? The lie of a friendly handshake and a kind word—that is all. But I?

KARLOO. Be careful, the servants are near!

DOLORÈS. Then try to close the door.

KARLOO. How?

DOLORÈS. Oh, casually!

KARLOO. I can't.

DOLORÈS. You men! Let me do it! [*In a rather high-pitched, affected voice.*] Won't the fire burn, Karloo? I'm frozen to death here!

KARLOO [*near the fireplace*]. Indeed, Madame, it is cold!

DOLORÈS [*calmly*]. It must be the open door. [*Calling.*] Gudule! Gudule!

GUDULE [*appearing*]. Madame?

DOLORÈS. Close the door.

GUDULE. Very well, Madame. [*She closes the door and disappears.*]

DOLORÈS. That is done! Now let me tell you the truth, Karloo! I cannot stand this life any longer. If you were as weary as I am—— [*She sits down on a chair to the right of the table.*]

KARLOO. Am I weary of it? Thanks be to God, at last I can talk freely! Don't you think I, too, am tortured every instant by these lies I force on myself? My eyes lie, my mouth, this very hand of mine lies! It's so utterly unworthy! It is infamous! If *that* is what you mean—yes, *I am* weary of it all—terribly weary—unspeakably!

DOLORÈS [*nervously*]. So much?

KARLOO. Yes, yes—*so much*!

DOLORÈS. And why? After all, what do you suffer? For your love I live in agony in this world and am damned in the next! What are you sacrificing for me?

KARLOO [*coming down to the left of the table*]. What am I sacrificing for you? My best and most sacred possessions: my honor and my loyalty, my conscience, my self-respect, the unparalleled joy to be able to say: "I am an honest man—I am doing my duty!" You sacrifice your future life, I am sacrificing this one, and I bear my damnation about with me all the time! Here is *my* hell; it follows me everywhere: contempt for myself!

[*He goes up-stage again.*]

DOLORÈS [*looking at him uneasily*]. Karloo!

KARLOO [*returning to her, and standing above the table*]. Think of it: the part I play in your house is hateful, revolting. This man calls me friend, receives me with open arms and in full confidence—a most generous and devoted man! And I deceive him, like the lowest of blackguards. His friendship, so freely offered, I use as a dagger to cut his throat! Nor is that all! This man of all men is the most virtuous—I worship his goodness—yes, it is an awful thing to say, it seems like the worst of follies: I

would strangle the person who dared deceive him, even as *I* am deceiving him! *I* am your lover, and I lack the courage to stop. God knows I hated him as you hate him, but remorse—— You are fortunate because you hate him. I worship him. Yes, I love him! That is the most infamous of all! I love him and I lie to him, deceive him, rob him!

DOLORÈS [*terror-stricken*]. Don't you love me any more?

KARLOO [*with a gesture indicative of despair*]. Ah!

DOLORÈS [*quickly*]. No! You used not to have those scruples!

KARLOO. Remorse, rather! And you blamed me just now for having none!

DOLORÈS [*as before, with anxiety*]. Now you have too many! Tell me the truth—tell it—don't you love me any more?

KARLOO. Oh, if I could!

DOLORÈS. You see!

KARLOO [*approaching her, but not looking at her*]. I see! Yes, I see that I am as powerless to snatch from my heart this fatal poison as I was to prevent its taking root there! You have so caught me by your spells and magic, you love-sorceress, that in spite of myself I loved you, desired you with my

whole being, and now even as I curse you I love you, and desire you more than ever before!

DOLORÈS [*standing up*]. Tell me, then, do you want me to have courage for us both? Shall I give you your liberty?

KARLOO. Dolorès!

DOLORÈS. Then—adieu! Go away! I don't want to see you again!

KARLOO [*drawing her passionately to him*]. Ah! do that—and I will kill you!

DOLORÈS [*throwing herself into his arms*]. Yes, yes, you love me! Take me away from that man—take me away!

KARLOO. Take you away?

DOLORÈS. To the end of the world—we two together! Let us be free! To-night let us go!

KARLOO. Good God! that's not possible!

DOLORÈS. Why?

KARLOO. No one is allowed to leave the city!

DOLORÈS. That's true—but to-morrow?

KARLOO. Sh! Some one is coming! [*They separate quickly.*]

Enter GUDULE suddenly.

GUDULE [*nervously*]. Madame la Comtesse, it's Jonas the bellringer; he brings bad news.

KARLOO. Bad news?

JONAS [*as he enters, nervously*]. Madame, has Monsieur le Comte come in yet?

DOLORÈS. No.

JONAS. Then an accident's happened! He was arrested this afternoon!

KARLOO. Arrested?

JONAS. Yes, Captain!

KARLOO [*going quickly toward the window to get his cape and hat, while JONAS and GUDULE are speaking in the doorway*]. I'll go at once.

DOLORÈS [*in an undertone*]. What are you going to do?

KARLOO [*also in an undertone*]. Save him, if I can!

DOLORÈS [*as before*]. You?

KARLOO. Yes, I. [*Aloud.*] Jonas, torches! There, let us start! [JONAS goes out quickly with GUDULE.]

DOLORÈS. You are not going!

KARLOO. This may mean his death!

DOLORÈS. Well?

KARLOO [*coming down-stage right; nervously*]. Ah, Dolorès, you make me afraid!

DOLORÈS. You make me pity you! Save him, then! My husband! My master! Too bad that I

cannot deceive him to-morrow for you! Nor you this evening for him!

KARLOO [*shocked*]. Ah! devil!

DOLORÈS [*passionately*]. I love you!

JONAS [*joyfully announces in the doorway*]. Monsieur le Comte!

Enter RYSOOR.

KARLOO [*running to him and taking his hands effusively*]. Thank God, you've returned alive from those hangmen!

RY. [*shaking his hand, and keeping an eye all the while on DOLORÈS*]. Then you knew I was arrested?

DOLORÈS [*going to him and offering her forehead to be kissed*]. Jonas just brought us the news, my dear master. We were both in mortal terror.

RY. [*taking her hands in his and kissing her forehead. He looks at her with infinite tenderness*]. You are trembling, Dolorès?

DOLORÈS. Yes, this sudden news—and then your arrival an instant later!

RY. Dolorès! There's nothing to fear now! Here I am at home once more, in the midst of my loved ones! How pale you are!

DOLORÈS [*trying to smile*]. It's nothing.

KARLOO [*after laying his cape and hat on the table*].
Natural—emotions!

DOLORÈS. Yes.

[*RYSOOR goes up to the window and lays his sword on the bench.*]

KARLOO [*aside to DOLORÈS*]. How infamous of us!

DOLORÈS [*aside to KARLOO*]. There is something worse! [*To RYSOOR, who returns down-stage.*] I shall have your supper served, master. You must be faint with hunger.

RYs. No! I have some business affairs to discuss first with Karloo! The supper may wait. And let the servants retire!

DOLORÈS. I shall see to it at once. [*She goes out.*]

RYs. [*following DOLORÈS with his eyes until she disappears*]. Jonas, close the door and keep watch!

JONAS. Very well, master. [*He takes his place by the door.*]

RYs. [*to KARLOO*]. Quick now! Have you just seen Galèna?

KARLOO. As soon as you arrived, Jonas came himself to tell us: Bakkerzeel, Cornélis, and me! *There* I learned of your arrival!

RYs. And the results accomplished?

KARLOO. Everything! The Prince of Orange is

coming to help us with his most powerful supporters; he made an advance under cover of night, through the Forest de Soignes.

RYS. And at this moment, my dear Karloo, he is hidden in the wood of La Cambre, one quarter of a league's distance from the city.

KARLOO. At last! And to-night?

RYS. [*taking KARLOO's hands in his*]. To-night!

KARLOO. May the hour of battle, of liberation, be blessed!

RYS. My good, my brave Karloo!

KARLOO. You can never know how I thirst after sacrifice! I feel capable of the most exalted deeds!

RYS. We are on the eve of great things. Is everything prepared?

KARLOO. Everything! The Weavers' Guild marches under Bakkerzeel; the Tanners' and the Brewers' under Cornélis; the Civil Guard under me!

RYS. By the way, the bailiff has gone——

KARLOO. To my home—to order disarmament. You can imagine how I followed his orders! This command, too, will serve our cause.

RYS. How?

KARLOO [*pointing outside to the Place*]. Those chains around the Grande-Place would stop the

Prince's cavalry! I hope to get permission this evening to unhook them, on the pretext that I must send away my muskets.

RYS. Then you will not be with us at ten o'clock, in the trench by the Porte de Louvain?

KARLOO. What difference will that make? I am not especially needed there. Here, on the other hand, I can have all my men ready at a moment's notice—weapons ready, and the passage free.

RYS. Then we shall meet at the Town Hall.

KARLOO. At eleven, by Jonas' door.

RYS. [*going to the table, as KARLOO goes up-stage to get his cape and hat*]. Jonas!

JONAS [*coming down-stage to RYSOOR*]. Your Honor?

RYS. Has Galèna given you your instructions?

JONAS. All.

RYS. How about the soldier who was forced on you as a comrade?

JONAS. The trumpeter? He's there in the middle of the Grande-Place, asleep in the snow!

RYS. Drunk?

JONAS. Dead drunk!

RYS. Good! Now, go away, and not a word, above all, to your wife!

JONAS [*at the small door, down-stage*]. A bellringer's wife! Lord! [*Showing his tongue.*] A bell-clapper!

[*He goes out, leaving the door open.*]

RYS. [*to KARLOO*]. Are you going?

KARLOO. Yes, with Jonas, through the garden.

RYS. Go, then, my dear Karloo! This evening, as never before, I feel the need of pressing a loyal heart to my heart, a faithful and devoted one like yours!

KARLOO [*troubled*]. Until to-night, then!

RYS. [*going up to the window again*]. Until to-night!

KARLOO [*about to leave; aside*]. This agony! I can escape *him* still, but can I escape from myself?

[*He goes out.*]

RYS. [*to himself*]. *Patrie*, you can have no doubt of my devotion: I have set your affairs in order before my own!

Enter DOLORÈS through the large door.

DOLORÈS. Now! [*Stopping.*] Isn't Karloo here?

RYS. No, Dolorès, he has gone! The servants have retired?

DOLORÈS [*going to a position above the table, to the right*]. You asked to have them out of the way.

RYS. Yes, I wanted to be quite alone with you—I have something very important to say. [*He goes up-stage above her, to the left, closes the door, then returns.*]

DOLORÈS [*anxiously*]. To me?

RYS. Yes.

DOLORÈS. What is it? You seem very disturbed.

RYS. [*looking attentively at her*]. Dolorès, something has happened in this house since I went away. What do you know about a man who was seen leaving your room last night?

DOLORÈS [*quickly*]. My room?

RYS. Yes.

DOLORÈS [*as before*]. It is a lie!

RYS. No! There is not the shadow of a doubt! For the sake of your honor and mine, only one thing remains to be known: why was that man there?

DOLORÈS. What do I know?

RYS. Let us try to learn who——

DOLORÈS. Perhaps one of the maids——

RYS. Then how did it happen that the man said, addressing the maid: “It’s nothing—go back—*Madame!*” [*A gesture of surprise from DOLORÈS.*] *Madame* was the word!

DOLORÈS [*terrified*]. It’s a lie!

RYS. These words were spoken and heard.

DOLORÈS [*losing her presence of mind*]. Never!
That Spaniard lied!

RYS. [*bursting forth*]. How do you know he was a Spaniard?

DOLORÈS [*panic-stricken*]. Oh!

RYS. [*beside himself with anger*]. Then it was true!
Poor, miserable woman! Your lover?

DOLORÈS. Monsieur!

RYS. Dare to deny it! He was your lover!

DOLORÈS [*resolutely*]. Yes!

RYS. Ah!

DOLORÈS. You force me to admit it, and I *do* admit it!

RYS. And you don't regret it! You are treacherous, disloyal! You are not even afraid! You have no particle of shame! Haven't you even the modesty to defend yourself?

DOLORÈS. Say rather, Monsieur, that I have not sunk so low: do not blame me for the little decency I still have, the decency to confess! Yes, it is true: I am guilty. I have no excuse to offer you, either; that allows me no pity for myself. Kill me! You have the right! I am ready to die! No, I shan't try to save myself by further lies! I have no more

lies, no more hypocrisy, thank God! Now you know everything! Kill me, strike me, and let us make an end of it!

RYS. [*confused*]. You say that to me! You——

DOLORÈS. Monsieur, you don't know what I feel! I swear there is a time when death itself seems a deliverance! At least I shan't be forced to mask my troubles under an everlasting smile, and sympathize with your enthusiasm, which I detest—to smile that hideous smile of love, when I feel only hatred!

RYS. Hatred!

DOLORÈS. How sweet it is to be able to tell you that!

[*He totters into one of the chairs to the right.*]

RYS. Do you hate me? What an unworthy, ungrateful coward you are! Then when I spoke to you, an orphan without a sou, when I offered you my love, and said: "Here is my fortune, my position, my name—take them, they are all yours," I was to blame that day—in the darkest street of the poorest quarter of this city, when I took you from your miserable room, your hearth without a fire, your table without bread, from that bed where your mother agonized in the midst of poverty! And since then—have you found me a suspicious husband,

or jealous, or tyrannical? Have I deserved your hatred?

DOLORÈS. Ah, Monsieur!

RYS. My God! Do your duty as an upright husband, have only one thought: your wife's happiness! In exchange for satisfying every whim, every wish of this wife, I ask only a little affection! Then come home—and this greets you! A crime so brazen, so open, so shameless, staring you in the face, and you say: "Well, yes—that's the way it is! And then —?" I presume you will now prove with a word that *I* am to blame?

DOLORÈS. Oh, God! Yes, you *are* to blame!

RYS. Ha!

DOLORÈS. You!

RYS. I?

DOLORÈS. You! You have been too good to me, Monsieur. I realize that—I confess it. For ten years I have been thankful to you. God knows I came to you an honest girl, with every intention of remaining so! Have you helped me? Never! You killed my gratitude by boring me; my tenderness you repaid with indifference!

RYS. But my love!

DOLORÈS [*rising and going to the left*]. Your love!

You talk of your love! I know who your first love is! I know my rival: your beloved Flanders! Your Fatherland, your *Patrie*, as you call it! She is your real wife—your mistress! She is your only love, and I—ha!

RYS. Now you insult the only faith I have left!

DOLORÈS. Really, Monsieur, the life I have led—you with your insane passion for that something that you call “Liberty!” What is my life, with you going off eternally on these suspicious journeys, your comings and goings at night? Then you sit so silent at meals, and look at nothing, or something mysterious that lies beyond me! And yet I am there all the time, and I say to myself: “He is thinking of her!” Ah, Monsieur, you have not counted the days I have suffered nor the nights when I cried myself to sleep! You never even suspected my frightful loneliness, my heart that was burning with tenderness! To that heart crying out the only answer that came was “Patriotism!” What difference does it make to me whether or not the Netherlands are free? I am a woman, and my *Patrie* is love! If you had paid one quarter the attention to it that you have to your *Patrie*, you and I would not be in this situation!

RYS. I am not trying to make you see that both are the same.

DOLORÈS. I admit, you couldn't make me understand that!

RYS. You are a true daughter of that wretched race that is crushing us! Oh, thrice-cursed Spain, selfish, cruel, here is your blood!

DOLORÈS. You are right, our races cannot be mixed; we must rend one another to pieces! You had no business marrying me! I should never have thought of it, I, a Spaniard and a Catholic! I am proud of that! A Flemish husband—and a rebel! An apostate, a coward, and a perjurer!

RYS. What do you know of that?

DOLORÈS. It makes no difference now! Let's make an end to this! [*She sits on the small chair before the table.*] You are the master and I am your slave! Kill me! I have told you to, and I am ready.

RYS. It seems to agree with you Spaniards, this spilling the blood of women! But that will not be my method of punishment.

DOLORÈS. Then, Monsieur, what have you decided to do with me?

RYS. I shall tell you that when I know the name of your lover, which you are to tell me!

DOLORÈS [*ironically*]. Ah, if you hope to learn that——

RYS. Who is he?

DOLORÈS. You will never know.

RYS. Who is the man? You *will* tell me?

DOLORÈS. No!

RYS. [*taking her violently by the wrist, and bringing her to a standing position*]. Tell me!

DOLORÈS [*crying from the pain, as she disengages herself and goes toward the right*]. I see it is not necessary to be Spanish in order to know how to torture a woman!

RYS. [*as he looses her hand*]. True! [*Controlling himself.*] It was unworthy! Well, I don't need you. I have a way of knowing: by the wound!

DOLORÈS [*in an undertone, frightened*]. The hand!

RYS. The hand! Yes, you have said it: the hand!

DOLORÈS [*terrified*]. Oh, he knows! He will find out who—he will kill him!

RYS. Will I? Yes, I will! I swear to you I will kill him!

DOLORÈS [*aside*]. Kill me, yes! But him—I know a way to prevent that!

[*A distant clock strikes nine.*]

RYs. [*trembling*]. The hour is striking! [*He goes up to the window.*]

DOLORÈS [*to herself, as she looks at RYSOOR*]. It is the hour for his church service—he is going.

RYs. [*to himself, as he takes his sword*]. Duty first, then revenge! [*He goes to the door at the left and, as he is about to leave:*] To-morrow, Madame, to-morrow! when your love will be dead!

[*He goes out.*]

DOLORÈS [*alone*]. Dead! My Karloo! Yes, if I allow you the time to kill him! [*She goes up-stage quickly, and takes her mantle, which lies on the chair.*]

SCENE II: *A trench not far from the Porte de Louvain. To the right, at the back, seen from an oblique angle, is the Porte de Louvain and the profile of the rampart, above which are the steeples and houses of the higher part of the city. Stretching from the back of the stage, left, to the front, is the counterscarp of the trench, which is very deep. The trench is "practicable" and entirely on the stage, the right side extending between the rampart and the counterscarp, which runs crosswise. To the left is a patrol path, easily visible to the audience. It leads from the top of the*

counterscarp down into the trench. Down-stage, on the same side, is a ruined windmill, among shrubs of various sorts. To the right rises a tower, the top of which is invisible. At the back a country landscape can be seen, with windmills covered with snow and glistening in the moonlight. To the right, in front of the counterscarp, a large hole has been dug through the ice in the trench.

As the curtain rises, the First and Second Officers of the Prince of Orange and a soldier are seen coming cautiously down the path on the left, crouching for fear of being seen from the rampart. The soldier follows the officers.

SECOND OFFICER [*who walks behind the First*]. Gérard, do you see anything?

FIRST OFFICER [*going to the right*]. Nothing! The water in the trench is frozen solid, but I see no one.

SECOND OFFICER [*pointing to a sentinel unseen by the audience, as he is supposed to be standing behind the tower.*] Look out for that sentinel!

FIRST OFFICER. And you look out for that big hole in the ice.

SECOND OFFICER. This bright moonlight is bad for us.

FIRST OFFICER. Be patient, it's beginning to cloud over. [*To the soldier.*] Keep careful watch at the counterscarp!

[*The soldier begins to climb the path. A bell in the city rings.*]

SECOND OFFICER. Quarter to ten.

FIRST OFFICER. It's time—and no one here!

SECOND OFFICER. There is something mysterious about this! Sh! Don't move! Some one's coming! Here they are!

FIRST OFFICER. Probably. But stand aside, comrade! [*To the soldier.*] Run to the Prince!

[*They crouch behind the bushes to the left. RY-SOOR appears on the right. With RYSOOR are GALÈNA, JONAS, BAKKERZEEL, and CORNÉLIS. RYSOOR leads the party. He comes down to the middle of the stage, beckoning to the rest to follow him. They do so and come down the path.*]

RY. [*going unaccompanied toward the left and looking at the snow in the trench*]. Here are footsteps in the snow! They are here, Galèna!

FIRST OFFICER [*to the other*]. They are the ones!

RY. [*seeing the officers, who come forth from their place of hiding*]. Who goes there?

SECOND OFFICER. Orange!

RYSOOR. Brabant! God be with you, comrades!

[He and his companions salute the officers.]

FIRST and SECOND OFFICERS *[saluting as they advance]*. And with you, Messieurs!

RYs. Is the Prince there?

FIRST OFFICER. Here he is!

[The PRINCE OF ORANGE, followed by two soldiers, appears on the path at the left.]

RYs. Yes, it's he! Galèna, keep strict watch over there—we may be surprised!

THE PRINCE. Rysoor, my friend, I was beginning to think that something had happened to you.

RYs. Thank God, no! Monseigneur, here are the leaders of our enterprise—all except one—but he is helping us to his utmost.

THE PRINCE. Messieurs, I grasp all your loyal hands in that of the Count! God protect our cause!

THE CONSPIRATORS *[saluting]*. And your Excellency!

THE PRINCE. And now to work! We have little time! But first—those sentinels up there?

RYs. Safe and tried! Bound to our cause!

THE PRINCE. There's nothing to fear, then?

RYS. Nothing, Monseigneur!

THE PRINCE. What is this hole?

RYS. It has been cut in the ice for victims: the cemeteries are full to overflowing!

THE PRINCE. Poor city! Are we not halfway between the Porte de Cologne and the Porte de Louvain?

CORNÉLIS. Yes, Monseigneur: there is the Porte de Louvain, over there!

THE PRINCE. Good!

BAKKERZEEL. How many men has your Excellency hidden in the wood of La Cambre?

THE PRINCE. Three thousand picked cavalry, each one with a foot-soldier whom he can carry on the croup with him. In all, six thousand of the best men.

RYS. The city can muster twelve thousand. We are numerous!

THE PRINCE. Yes, but we must effect an entrance first!

RYS. We will, Monseigneur. All the guards at the Porte de Louvain are our men, like these sentinels on the rampart.

THE PRINCE [*joyfully*]. Is that your work, Rysoor?

RYS. No, not mine, but Bakkerzeel's and Galèna's. They did that when I was away!

THE PRINCE. Thanks be to God! Messieurs, a master-stroke!

RYS. They are German lancers, Lutherans and Calvinists, threatened as such by the Duke of Alba. Their fear has brought them over to our side.

THE PRINCE. Good! So they will open the gate?

CORNÉLIS. At a signal from the belfry.

THE PRINCE. Which will be given by——?

JONAS. By me, Monseigneur!

THE PRINCE. Jonas?

JONAS. Does Monseigneur recognize me?

THE PRINCE. Why, our dear old bellringer!

RYS. At midnight Jonas will ring the big bell as hard as he can, the portcullis drops, and your six thousand men are inside! All our friends rush into the streets, crying: "To arms!" Galèna runs to the Palace, Bakkerzeel occupies the Jacobins', I the Town Hall. Ten thousand men coming forth from the shadows throw themselves on the Spaniards. The Duke of Alba is cut to pieces before he has time to put on his spurs!

THE PRINCE. Good! But we must prepare for every emergency: the most unexpected turn of af-

fairs has often destroyed the best-laid plans! In an hour's time we may be still unprepared.

RYS. In that case, Monseigneur, Jonas instead of giving the signal to come forth will give one meaning, "Save yourselves!"

THE PRINCE. Another signal?

RYS. Yes. If all goes well, then the big bell——

JONAS. Roland!

RYS. Roland! Yes, Roland will then ring as loud as possible, as on the great festival days.

THE PRINCE. And in case of disaster?

RYS. The death-knell. In this city of death that is always in place!

THE PRINCE. So then: the call to arms, and the call for retreat! Good!

[The hour strikes in the distance, and is repeated by many other bells.]

RYS. Sainte-Gudule is striking ten. If your men start at eleven, they will be able to advance without being heard to within a thousand steps of the ramparts, and be ready for the signal.

THE PRINCE. One thing more: how shall we be able to recognize our allies in the city streets?

RYS. *[showing a white neck-cloth attached to the hilt of his sword]*. This white neck-cloth, Monsei-

gneur, which is attached either to the sword or on the hat.

THE PRINCE. Everything seems wisely planned, Rysoor. Messieurs, I am not a man of many words: I shall not speak of the lamentable condition of our *Patrie*. You know it, alas! only too well. We are engaged in a desperate enterprise; one false step may spoil everything. In the name of all that you hold sacred, my friends, do not for an instant forget yourselves! No frivolity—not a useless word—especially to the women! Return to your homes, put out the lights, hide your weapons. Let the city sleep more soundly to-night than usual. Now, let us separate—until later! May God give us only a little help and—you and I will take care of the rest!

RYS. Until later, Monseigneur!

GALÈNA [*pointing to the left*]. Silence! A patrol!

RYS. Which direction?

GALÈNA. On the counterscarp!

RYS. [*uneasily*]. How does it happen to be there?

[JONAS *climbs up the embankment.*]

BAKKERZEEL. That's the guard from the Porte de Cologne. It comes this far.

THE PRINCE. Bend down, Messieurs! Not a word! [*To JONAS.*] Is it coming?

JONAS [*lying down on the rampart*]. Yes, Monseigneur.

CORNÉLIS [*who is looking toward the right, quickly*]. There's another, coming toward us, following the walls!

GALÈNA. Caught between two fires!

RYS [*pointing to the left*]. Your swords, Messieurs! Let us charge on this side.

[*He draws his sword, while the other conspirators do likewise, and stand ready to fall upon the patrol.*]

THE PRINCE [*quickly*]. This is madness! We shall spoil everything!

RYS. But we are trapped in this trench!

THE PRINCE. Keep cool, Rysoor, keep cool! [*To the First Officer.*] Gérard! Quick, my Icelanders, quick! Behind these walls, Messieurs! Then let the sea-dogs loose. They are used to this sort of thing!

[*Together with the officers, he hides behind the mill, while RYSOOR and the conspirators seek the shadow of the town, on the right. The sea-dogs, coming out of the underbrush at the left, come on to the stage, then conceal themselves by the side of the rampart. At the top of the*

path a patrol of six men is seen; one of them is an officer. The Spaniards descend the path to the stage and turn toward the trench when they find their way barred. At a signal, which sounds like the cry of an owl, all the sea-dogs attack the patrol simultaneously: two sea-dogs to each Spaniard. One throws a lasso over the Spaniard's neck, while the other disarms him instantaneously. The surprised soldiers, finding themselves gagged, struggle. There is a fierce conflict, during which choked cries of rage are heard. The conspirators come from their hiding-places to help the Icelanders, who, having strangled all the soldiers, throw their bodies into the open pit. Some of the conspirators scale the counterscarp, thus precipitating a great mass of snow down into the trench; others stamp on the snow over the pit, while two soldiers gather up the weapons that have fallen during the struggle.]

RYS. That is over with!

[The sea-dogs run out. There is no trace of the buried patrol.]

THE PRINCE *[walking up the path]*. Until midnight, Messieurs! And—courage!

RYS. Quick, Monseigneur! Here comes the other patrol!

[THE PRINCE and his officers quickly disappear along the path. RYSOOR and his companions hide behind the wall. The patrol appears toward the right, crosses the stage, where it is plainly seen in the bright moonlight, marching over the very spot where their dead comrades lie buried, and then goes up the other side. The moment it reaches the top of the counterscarp RYSOOR and his friends come cautiously from their places, crouching and looking after the disappearing soldiers as the bells of the city are heard ringing.]

JONAS [standing by the pit]. My bell is not heard!
[They all disappear behind the tower.]

Curtain.

ACT III

ACT III

SCENE I: *The DUKE OF ALBA's private room in the palace of the government. The room has a high, vaulted ceiling; the general effect is rich but sombre. Down-stage to the right is a door leading to the interior apartments; before it is a large armchair. Halfway up-stage on the same side is a huge Flemish fireplace, above which hangs a portrait of King Philip II. The room narrows toward the back of the stage. There are doors to the right, and a window at the back opening upon a view of the city. Halfway up-stage to the left is an entrance. There are two tables covered with velvet tapestries bearing the arms of the House of Austria: one at the left, down-stage, the other facing obliquely, at the right, opposite the fireplace. The Duke of Alba, seated by the fireplace in a large armchair, his features outlined by the light of the fire, is buried in thought, his elbow resting on the table, as he looks into the burning embers. VARGAS and DELRIO, sitting at the table on the left, are busied*

with their correspondence. At the back of the stage is MAÎTRE CHARLES, the city executioner. LA TRÉMOÏLLE is sitting at a small table reading by the light of a double-branched candelabrum. The room is lighted with candelabra decorated with the Austrian arms, and bearing large candles of yellow wax. To the left of the Duke's table is a seat without a back.

LA TR. [*rising, book in hand, and coming down-stage to the left*]. Charming room! [*To VARGAS, in an undertone.*] Messieurs!

VARGAS. Monsieur le Marquis?

LA TR. Is Monsieur le Duc always in this peculiar humor?

DELRIO [*aside to LA TRÉMOÏLLE*]. No, Monsieur le Marquis, he is troubled about Doña Rafaële's health.

VARGAS [*also under his breath*]. Doña Rafaële left the table this evening after a frightful coughing fit, and her physician, Maître Alberti, has just had what I imagine was a serious conference with the Duke.

LA TR. Poor child!

DELRIO. It will doubtless be necessary to send the Señora to Spain, for Maître Alberti declares that the climate of Flanders is killing her. She needs, he says, the warm and perfumed air of Andalusia; she

cannot hope to last in this damp climate until even early April.

VARGAS. This separation will be a terrible blow to Monsieur le Duc. He loves his daughter more than anything else in the world!

DELRIO. And then a city in war time is no place for a young girl.

[A guard enters, and goes tiptoe to DELRIO and VARGAS, speaking to them, as LA TRÉMOÏLLE resumes his place and continues reading.]

DELRIO *[rises quietly, crosses the stage, and says to the Duke in an undertone]*. Monseigneur, the messenger from Spain has arrived.

ALBA. Ah, news from the King! Let him come in!

[The messenger quietly enters, makes a low bow, then draws forth the dispatches from a small leather sack, laying them on a silver tray which is on the table.]

You have been quick, Perez!

MESSENGER. Only fifteen days, Monseigneur, and in this snow! And I have had to look out for these rebel bands which overrun the country.

ALBA. Rest yourself—you must return to-morrow.

[The messenger goes out with the guard. ALBA opens the packet of dispatches.]

A letter for you, Vargas, in His Majesty's own hand!

VARGAS [*going to the Duke and taking the letter very respectfully*]. I am truly honored by the King!

ALBA. And one for you, too, Delrio.

DELRIO [*following VARGAS's example, and kissing the seal obsequiously*]. God save the King!

[VARGAS goes to the table, takes a pair of scissors, with which he severs the silk cord holding the seal, then reads the letter down-stage, while DELRIO goes to the small table up-stage, and opens his letter in the same manner as VARGAS.]

VARGAS [*reading in an undertone*]. "Señor Vargas: Your reports I treasure highly. Continue to keep me secretly informed of all you know about Monsieur le Duc. Burn this letter carefully. God be with you, Philip. I mistrust Delrio. Keep strict watch over him——" [*He goes toward the left, reading all the while, then returns, passing the table.*]

DELRIO [*coming down to the centre of the stage, as he reads his letter*]. "Señor Delrio: Many thanks for your excellent information. Continue to send me these secret reports as to what you learn of Monsieur le Duc. Burn this letter! God be with you,

Philip. I have small confidence in Vargas: never allow him out of your sight!" [*He returns to his place in the same manner as VARGAS.*]

VARGAS [*bowing to DELRIO before seating himself*].
My compliments!

DELRIO [*bowing to VARGAS*]. And mine to you!

ALBA. Messieurs, here is a post-scriptum from the King for you: "My son Don Carlos died suddenly on Christmas Eve!"

VARGAS and DELRIO. The Infante?

ALBA [*continuing*]. "I had forgotten to tell you before——"

LA TR. [*who is still reading, aside*]. Three months ago! A model father!

ALBA [*continuing*]. "This wretched son of mine has been the occasion of so much trouble that I am not sure whether we ought to mourn his death or congratulate ourselves!" Messieurs, we shall participate in His Majesty's grief by adopting mourning.

DELRIO. Of course, Monseigneur!

[*He and VARGAS seat themselves.*]

LA TR. [*to himself*]. With pleasure!

ALBA. Ah, you are still here, Monsieur le Marquis?

LA TR. Your Excellency having afforded me the

hospitality of your palace for a prison, while I await your pleasure to release me, I distract myself by reading of the campaigns of the Emperor Charles the Fifth.

ALBA [*sarcastically*]. A great king, Monsieur le Marquis. You French know something of *that*.

LA TR. He was indeed a great king, Monsieur le Duc. I once had the honor of dining with His Majesty at the convent of Saint-Just, and I still marvel at the vast amount of victuals His Majesty was able to consume. Great God! what an appetite!

ALBA. Imperative!

LA TR. Imperial!

ALBA. Great monarchs are great in all ways!

LA TR. Ah, King Philip has not the capacity of his worthy father.

ALBA [*biting his lip*]. We have fixed your ransom, Monsieur le Marquis, at——

LA TR. A hundred thousand crowns, Monsieur le Duc!

ALBA. A trifle! The French are so clever, they should be taxed double.

LA TR. [*unruffled*]. Then, Monsieur le Duc, I should pay three hundred thousand crowns, and you Spaniards would be none the richer!

ALBA [*violently*]. Maître Charles!

[*Every one's attention is riveted on the Duke. The executioner steps forward. DELRIO and VARGAS raise their heads and LA TRÉMOÏLLE quietly scans the Duke, who is scarcely able to overcome his wrath.*]

ALBA [*to the executioner*]. What were you telling me just now?

CHARLES. I took the liberty to remark that my assistants are asking for double pay, because of the fearful jobs they have to perform.

ALBA. Very well! And then?

CHARLES. Then we're out of ropes!

ALBA. Vargas, ask Rincon to have twenty of his men spend the night weaving hemp. Then?

CHARLES. Then, Monsieur le Duc, when *that* job's over—well, we don't know where to bury them—all those——

ALBA. I gave an order that holes were to be cut in the ice at each of the city gates.

VARGAS. That has been done, Monseigneur, at the Porte d'Anderleke and the Porte de Louvain.

ALBA. Do you hear, Maître Charles?

CHARLES. Yes, Monseigneur.

ALBA. Anything else?

CHARLES. That's all.

[ALBA strikes a bell.]

That is, unless Monseigneur has some commission for me to-night.

ALBA. I may have—wait! [*He rises. A valet appears at the right.*] Domingo, see whether the Doña Rafaële is resting.

[DOMINGO goes out through the same door by which he entered.]

Well, how is the city this evening, Delrio?

[DELRIO and VARGAS, seeing the Duke standing, rise, but he motions them to be seated.]

DELRIO. Splendid, Monseigneur—capital *Mardi-gras*: life, gaiety, yet all in good order—everything is satisfactory.

ALBA [*coming down-stage, in front of the table*]. I went out for a moment after the Angelus, and the lower part of the city seemed very quiet.

DELRIO. Monseigneur knows that the Flemish lack gaiety. There is not that Spanish spontaneity, so lively! No, the Fleming takes his pleasure internally. There is nothing on the surface.

ALBA. I did not see a single mask during my walk. [*He goes to the window at the back.*]

LA TR. Ah, these gentlemen! I saw one not long

ago, arm in arm with the bellringer. The rascal! *He* was enjoying himself!

ALBA [*opening the window*]. See how the city sleeps! There's not a light—in the whole Place there's not a cry!

VARGAS. That shows how tranquil the city is!

ALBA. Too much so! Still waters——! How is it that that tavern is not lighted up as usual?

DELRIO. Ah, the tavern, Monseigneur: we have reason to be dissatisfied with the innkeepers.

VARGAS. And the bakers.

DELRIO. And the butchers, too.

ALBA. What do you mean?

VARGAS. We should tell your Excellency that only this morning eighteen innkeepers, bakers, and butchers, among the most influential in the city, refused to open their shops and make their display.

ALBA. Eighteen?

VARGAS. No less!

ALBA. And you did not force them?

DELRIO. Your pardon, Monseigneur! We gave them until noon to reconsider; as they still remained obdurate, we shut them up in the Jacobins'!

LA TR. [*to himself*]. That will scarcely improve business!

ALBA [*coming down-stage*]. Indeed! rebellion among the merchants!

DELRIO. Ah, Monseigneur, it is all because of this latest tax.

VARGAS. Since your Excellency has imposed a tax of 10 per cent. on all provisions, merchandise, and personal property——

DELRIO. What, opposition from the tradespeople!

VARGAS. They are fearfully wrought up!

ALBA. Really!

DELRIO. This nation of shopkeepers is so sensitive about material advantages!

ALBA. Well, by Saint-Jacques, its neck will have a chance to feel sensitive! Maître Charles, have eighteen new ropes prepared. At sunrise to-morrow I want to see these eighteen rascals dangling above their own doorsteps. Understand? From their own sign-posts! You may go! Now you have something to busy you with to-night.

LA TR. [*to himself*]. That won't settle matters!

ALBA [*to DOMINGO, who reappears*]. Well?

DOMINGO. Doña Rafaële thanks your Excellency, and begs to wish you good-night before she retires.

ALBA. Dear child! Good! I shall go to her at

once! The news from Holland, Messieurs, in three words?

DELRIO [*holding some letters*]. Wholly favorable, Monseigneur! Amsterdam is quiet—the whole of the low country inundated—but that makes no difference to us.

ALBA. And the Prince of Orange?

DELRIO. According to the spies' reports, from the fifteenth of the present month, the Prince was in the neighborhood of Leyden.

ALBA. That is very well. [*He walks toward the right.*]

VARGAS [*looking through his notes*]. No. I beg your pardon—Mons——

[*The Duke stops short.*]

DELRIO [*showing him the report*]. No—Leyden. [*Also rising.*] Here is mine.

ALBA [*angrily*]. By Saint-Jacques, we have treacherous spies! Are they making game of me?

VARGAS [*showing a letter*]. Monsieur le Comte de Nassau——

ALBA [*violently snatching the letter from him, crumpling and throwing it across the room*]. I care nothing about the Comte de Nassau! He will make no more than a mouthful! Good God! Messieurs,

I give you exactly an hour in which to find the whereabouts of Orange! He is the only one I fear!

NOIRCARMES *enters, left, during the last part of this speech.*

NOIR. Then let your Excellency rest assured: you need have no further fear of him!

ALBA. How is that?

NOIR. Recent and authentic reports have arrived: he crossed back over the Rhine at Strassburg last Sunday with three hundred men. All his troops had revolted because there was no pay for them—they have scattered, disappeared!

ALBA. Where did you get your information?

NOIR. From the French Ambassador, who wishes your Excellency a good-night.

ALBA. Splendid, Vive-dieu! This is news; it puts new blood into my veins. Messieurs, let me sign your papers!

[VARGAS *pushes forward his chair upon which the Duke sits to sign the papers which are given to him.*]

Nothing suspicious this evening?

NOIR. Absolutely nothing, Monseigneur; the city is asleep.

ALBA [*rising*]. Then, Messieurs, I think we might well follow its example! Let us arrange these papers first and then retire. [*To LA TRÉMOÏLLE.*] Monsieur le Marquis, your room is next to mine, and——

Enter RAFAËLE, a nun, and a maid.

ALBA [*going to RAFAËLE and taking her tenderly in his arms*]. My dear child! Well?

RAFAËLE [*who is supported by the two women*]. Better.

ALBA [*to the women*]. That chair! How is the fearful cough?

RAFAËLE. Cough? [*LA TRÉMOÏLLE precedes the women and places the chair for RAFAËLE.*] Not so bad. [*She coughs.*]

ALBA. Sit down! [*He makes her sit in the chair.*] And your pains?

RAFAËLE [*smiling sadly*]. The same as ever!

ALBA. But Maître Alberti promised me to make you sleep!

RAFAËLE. Oh, I shall!

ALBA. Noircarmes, the window! The air is icy cold. [*He goes up toward the window, which NOIRCARMES closes. During this time LA TRÉMOÏLLE has placed a cushion under RAFAËLE'S feet.*]

RAFAËLE. Thank you, Monsieur.

ALBA [*coming down-stage again*]. Thank you, Marquis! [*He takes his daughter's hand.*] Always that same fever! And your hands are burning!

RINCON *enters tiptoe and speaks with NOIRCARMES.*

RAFAËLE. I have just suffered such agonies; but now, truly, I am better.

ALBA [*kissing her hands affectionately*]. Dear, sweet child! Sweet, tender, little one!

[NOIRCARMES, VARGAS, and DELRIO, to whom RINCON has just been speaking, hesitate, then NOIRCARMES decides.]

NOIR. [*timidly*]. Monseigneur!

ALBA. Yes? What is it? I shall not need you further—you may go.

NOIR. I beg your Excellency's pardon, but there is something important.

ALBA [*impatiently*]. Must there always be something? I seem never to have the time or the right to be a father! Well, what is it?

NOIR. The captain of the militia——

ALBA. There is no longer any militia.

NOIR. Exactly, Monseigneur. This young man used to command the Civil Guard; we gave him an

order just now which he cannot execute without your Excellency's permission.

ALBA. Let him come in—and now, for God's sake, let us get things finished!

RINCON. Come in, Captain.

Enter KARLOO.

RAFAËLE [*aside*]. He?

ALBA [*with hauteur*]. Let me tell you at once, Monsieur, it is most daring of you to appear in my presence with your sword hanging at your side!

KARLOO. Monsieur le Duc, I am a captain!

[RINCON *stands at the back of the stage, near the door*; NOIRCARMES *near the Duke's table*; LA TRÉMOÏLLE *in front of the fireplace, the nun and the maid before the door.*]

ALBA [*as before*]. You are no longer one! The Civil Guard has been abolished. Your sword, Monsieur!

[*Without saying a word KARLOO gives his sword to NOIRCARMES, who hands it to RINCON, who lays it on the table to the left.*]

RAFAËLE [*to the Duke as she takes his hands in hers*]. Father, I beg you, don't be angry. It makes me very ill to hear you.

ALBA. Very well, my child! [*More softly to KARLOO.*] Monsieur, what do you wish?

KARLOO. Monsieur le Duc, Monsieur le Grand Prévôt ordered me this afternoon to gather together all the weapons of my company to-night and take them to the Town Hall—on pain of death.

[*RAFAËLE starts. She still holds her father's hand, trembling.*]

ALBA. Well?

KARLOO. Well, Monsieur le Duc, I am ready to obey the moment I have the means of doing so; it is quite impossible to transport eight hundred cuirasses, muskets, and helmets, on account of the chains that block the way into the Grand-Marché.

ALBA. Nonsense!

RAFAËLE. But that is very reasonable, Father.

ALBA [*softening*]. Hush, child! [*To KARLOO.*] And you ask——

KARLOO. To have the chains removed to-night, Monsieur le Duc, in the vicinity of the Town Hall.

ALBA. And if I refuse?

KARLOO. Then your Excellency need not ask for the weapons—only my head! That is simpler.

RAFAËLE [*to her father*]. He is right, Father.

ALBA. Noircarmes, do you see any objection?

NOIR. None, whatsoever, Monseigneur—only for one night!

ALBA. Good, then! Now, leave me!

[KARLOO *salutes, and turns to go.*]

RAFAËLE [*quickly, in an undertone*]. Father, don't let him go yet!

ALBA [*to KARLOO*]. Wait! [*To RAFAËLE.*] What is it?

RAFAËLE. Please give him back his sword. There is nothing so humiliating for a soldier as to be weaponless.

ALBA. Little silly! Why, a Civil Guard would not know how to use a sword!

RAFAËLE. Oh, yes, he would!

ALBA. How do you know?

RAFAËLE. I have seen them in action.

ALBA. Where?

RAFAËLE. The day I went to the Convent of Groenendaal. You remember, Father? Where I was insulted—the people threw stones at me!

ALBA. Yes, the scoundrels!

RAFAËLE. Well, the man who defended me so splendidly——

ALBA. Is this the man?

RAFAËLE. Yes.

ALBA. Vive-Dieu! Why not say so at once? Well! [*Graciously, to KARLOO.*] Captain, will you please come here? [*KARLOO comes down-stage.*] Here is a lady, I understand, who is under obligations to you.

KARLOO. Monsieur le Duc, I only did my duty toward a woman; that is, protect her against insult.

RAFAËLE. And I, Seigneur Karloo, do my duty by remembering what you did.

ALBA. Karloo! I seem to know that name! Captain, were you not at Gravelines?

KARLOO. Yes, Monsieur le Duc, and at Saint-Quentin; I was standard-bearer of Monsieur le Comte d'Egmont.

ALBA. Indeed! Well, Seigneur Karloo, a man who has made such good use of his sword as that shall not be deprived of it. You may have your weapon!

RAFAËLE [*joyfully pressing her father's hand*]. Splendid!

KARLOO. I beg your pardon, Monsieur le Duc. I may have my sword, you say, but in what capacity?

ALBA. As lieutenant of my guards. Noircarmes will send you your papers to-morrow.

RAFAËLE [*delighted*]. I am so glad!

ALBA [*to RAFAËLE*]. Are you happy?

RAFAËLE [*as before*]. Oh, yes!

KARLOO. Monsieur le Duc, I cannot take the sword.

ALBA [*surprised*]. I beg your pardon, Monsieur?

KARLOO. I am a Fleming, and as such I cannot serve in the King's army.

ALBA. Yet you served him under Monsieur d'Egmont!

KARLOO. Against the French, Monseigneur; but when it is a question of serving against my own people—never!

ALBA. By God! the audacity!

RAFAËLE [*trying to restrain her father during the following*]. Father!

KARLOO [*taking his sword from the table*]. Your Excellency has not noticed this blade: it is a simple, rustic piece of work, intended to guard over the sleeping city, or the *Patrie* when it is threatened; protect old men, women, children. Then it leaps forth joyfully from its sheath into the sunlight, ready and loyal for its duty! But when there is question of matching it with the executioner's blade, or using it as a signal for massacre in burning towns, I know well, Monsieur le Duc, it would turn its point to my

heart! We are far too Flemish, it and I! We understand nothing of Spanish ways! [*He lays his sword on the table. All are very surprised.*]

ALBA [*jumping up from his chair in fury*]. Noircarmes!

RAFAËLE [*also quickly rising, then throwing herself into his arms*]. Father!

[*Every one stands still.*]

ALBA [*restraining himself, after a pause*]. Monsieur, I can at least be grateful for a service rendered. You may thank your destiny, for no one else would have escaped in this way. Now go!

[*KARLOO bows to DOÑA RAFAËLE and is again about to leave.*]

NOIR. But the chains, Monseigneur?

ALBA. I have already given the order—let them down!

[*KARLOO goes out.*]

RAFAËLE [*who is exhausted*]. How terrible!

ALBA [*to his daughter, who is still in his arms, crying*]. See what you make me do, you whimsical, spoiled child!

RAFAËLE. Oh, I should so like to have seen at least *one* on our side—*him* especially.

ALBA. My dear!

RAFAËLE [*sobbing desperately*]. Now it's over. No one will ever care for us!

ALBA. Rafaële, my dearest, come, rest yourself—you must not be so excited.

RAFAËLE [*as before, to the nun and the maid*]. Take me now—take me away!

ALBA [*alarmed*]. The doctor—quick!

[*The women run to her. LA TRÉMOÏLLE opens the door and goes out with them and RAFAËLE, at the moment when MIGUEL appears at the back, having entered by the side door, which he leaves open.*]

You may retire, Messieurs—go! I shall keep watch. Good-night. [*He is about to follow his daughter.*]

NOIR. [*to whom MIGUEL has been speaking in an undertone*]. Monseigneur, one thing more.

ALBA. I want to hear nothing! Leave me in peace!

VARGAS. This is very important!

ALBA. Not more so than my daughter's health.

NOIR. Monseigneur, I beg you!

VARGAS. There is a woman here who insists on speaking to your Excellency.

ALBA [*brutally*]. Why?

NOIR. From what I can gather, the matter is of pressing importance.

ALBA. Some maniac. To-morrow!

ALL THREE [*insistently*]. Monseigneur!

ALBA [*losing his self-control*]. To-morrow, I say! To-morrow! [*He turns to leave.*]

DOLORÈS *has entered during these last words.*

DOLORÈS. To-morrow, Monseigneur? Are you sure you will see to-morrow?

[*ALBA comes down-stage and looks at her.*]

ALBA. That woman?

DOLORÈS. Yes, that woman, who implores you, Monsieur le Duc, who prays to you to listen to her.

ALBA. Take care, Madame, for if I find I am dealing with some fanatic, you had better go, for, by the living God, your head won't be worth a sou!

DOLORÈS. And you, Monseigneur, had better listen to what I have to say! And, by the same God, your head won't be worth a sou!

ALBA [*coldly*]. Good! Messieurs, stand apart and be ready to come at the first signal!

[*VARGAS, NOIRCARMES, and DELRIO go out at the left; MIGUEL through the large door at the back, while ALBA closes that on the right.*]

ALBA. Now, Madame, in a word, what brings you here?

DOLORÈS [*pale and distracted*]. In a word, Monseigneur, there is a man in this city whom I hate. That man threatened to kill me this evening, and, worse still, to kill another man, whom I love—he is my lover. That, in a word, is what brings me.

ALBA. And what is this to me?

DOLORÈS [*forcefully*]. It is a great deal to me! Yet it is strange what I am going to do. Let me speak!

ALBA. But——

DOLORÈS [*as before*]. For God's sake, let me speak! I know what I am saying! Don't you see, too, that if my reason returns to me, granted I *am* out of my mind, I shan't say a word? You don't know! Take advantage of my madness; it will save you!

ALBA [*surprised and interested, as he sits on the tabouret*]. Continue, Madame!

DOLORÈS [*as before*]. Where was I? I can't remember! Oh, yes; he threatened me, that man, and left me after saying that "he must go to service."

ALBA. Service? in this city?

DOLORÈS. Yes, in this city! Do you imagine that because your soldiers fill the streets people don't defy your edicts—in secret? I swear to you there

are ten thousand heretics here, who gather together at night in cellars, in attics, behind walls, to praise God, and curse you in their own way! Then I say to myself: "You are going to service, are you? And you want to kill him? Well, you will not kill him, because I can act sooner than you; I can strike before you can!"

ALBA. Good!

DOLORÈS. No, it is not good! I tell you it is infamous! This is between me and God! I must save my lover first of all! I will settle accounts with God later!

ALBA. Did you follow this man through the streets?

DOLORÈS. The black streets! It is a dead city, except for the patrols and your drunken soldiers. He goes on and on, and I follow; he runs, then I run. We arrive finally at the Porte de Louvain. Shadows come and go, talk together, and separate. Then everything is swallowed up, disappears into a dark, narrow passage, that leads underground——

ALBA. And then?

DOLORÈS. It all passes from my sight, and then I want to go down there, too, but I hear a voice from below: "Who goes there?", I am fearfully fright-

ened, and I go back. Then the moon comes out—no one! All this confusion, the cry of the sentinels in the distance, the clocks striking the hour! I look about me, I turn round, for I want to know, I want to see! It is a matter of life and death! In the midst of the rubbish I see a deep trench that sheds the rain-water off into the ditches. I put one foot into it—cold as ice! Then I go down. It is a vault! Yes, I will chance it! I go straight on, and see a bluish light; I hear confused sounds. At last I come to an iron grate. I draw a free breath, for I can see; finally, I can hear!

ALBA. And then what?

DOLORÈS. In this pit ten men are collected, under shelter of the counterscarp. The sound of their talking comes to me in gusts, when they speak louder than usual. They take no notice of the sentinels on the rampart, or the postern guards; for these are accomplices. [*The Duke starts.*] Yes! Yes! that is what is happening on your ramparts! I listen closely, and at the very first words I learn that they are not heretics, worshipping God in their own way: they are rebels in council! This is no Protestant service; it is a conspiracy! The man they gather around, standing, with uncovered heads, is in command! He

is no pastor, he is their chief: the Liberator, as they call him! Your most dangerous enemy—the Prince of Orange!

ALBA [*quickly springing up*]. The Prince? Ridiculous, Madame! Impossible!

DOLORES. Impossible? I saw him as plainly as I see you!

ALBA. It was an hallucination. According to the latest news, he was fifty leagues away, at the gates of Strassburg!

DOLORES. Yes? Well, according to the latest I heard, he was fifty steps away, at the gates of Brussels!

ALBA. Good God! If this is true! I can't listen to this alone! [*He goes to the door at the left, opens it, and calls.*] Vargas! Noircarmes! The die is cast! Madame, so much the worse for you if this is false! I have called my men!

DOLORES [*coming down-stage*]. Call them! It makes no difference to me now! I have done what I had to do!

Enter VARGAS, DELRIO, and NOIRCARMES.

ALBA. Messieurs, do you know what I have been told? The Prince of Orange—at the gates of Brussels!

VARGAS. The Prince?

DELRIO. Nonsense!

NOIR. Impossible! Who saw him?

ALBA. Madame.

Simultaneously { VARGAS. Absurd!
DELRIO. How can that be?
NOIR. All our reports——

ALBA [*motioning them to silence, and coming down to DOLORÈS, passing behind her*]. Now, now, let us keep cool. You have seen him, Madame? Good! And heard him, too. Did these men say anything?

DOLORÈS. Yes.

ALBA. What?

DOLORÈS. I could see quite plainly, because of the snow, but it was hard to hear—certain sentences—a word here and there.

ALBA. But what sentences? What words? Try to recall.

DOLORÈS. The Town Hall first. They spoke all the time about the Town Hall.

NOIR. Then, perhaps, a signal?

DOLORÈS. Yes, the signal! At midnight—a signal—from the belfry!

VARGAS. What was it to be?

DOLORÈS. Oh, I don't know—that! I did not hear!

ALBA. That makes little difference. What next?

DOLORÈS. At that signal the whole city is to rise up.

VARGAS. But—weapons?

DOLORÈS. They are armed!

DELRIO. And the Prince?

DOLORÈS. After the signal, he is to enter the city, filling the streets with his men.

ALBA. Are there many?

DOLORÈS. Six thousand!

ALL [*in terror*]. Six thousand?

DOLORÈS. I heard that perfectly! He is to come to the Grande-Place—the chains will be let down! One of them was to see to that: he will come here—or—he has come, has he not?

VARGAS. Indeed, he——

DOLORÈS [*triumphantly*]. You see?

NOIR. Yes, a short time ago!

DELRIO. That captain?

DOLORÈS [*excitedly*]. He is a conspirator, a traitor! Didn't you suspect that—didn't you understand? The way he talked? His—— [*Seeing the sword on the table.*] Why, this sword! [*She goes*

rapidly to the table and takes the sword; the others follow and crowd round her.] This sword! This is his!

ALBA. Yes. How did you know?

DOLORÈS [*first showing, then handing, him the sword*]. Why, this neck-cloth—that is the sign by which they are to recognize one another! Have that man followed, Monseigneur: he is a conspirator; he is one of their chiefs—the boldest of them all; he has even dared to come to you in person! [*She crosses back to the right.*]

ALBA. He will be found again, Madame.

[*He hands the sword to NOIRCARMES, who lays it on the table. DELRIO motions to MAÎTRE CHARLES, who enters.*]

NOIR. Yes, *he* is known.

ALBA. Quick, now! Tell us about the others! You saw them, did you not?

[*Again they gather about DOLORÈS.*]

DOLORÈS. Yes.

VARGAS. Do you know them?

DOLORÈS. All!

ALBA [*making a sign to DELRIO*]. Delrio! [*To DOLORÈS.*] Their names—quickly!

[*DELRIO seats himself at the table, and prepares to write.*]

DOLORÈS [*alarmed*]. Their names?

ALBA. Yes.

DOLORÈS. Must I also give you——

ALBA. The name of the chief first—this man you hate!

DOLORÈS. He—he is——

ALL. He is——?

DOLORÈS [*suddenly becoming panic-stricken*]. Oh, this is horrible!

VARGAS. Tell us!

DOLORÈS. No, I don't want to! Leave me! I am afraid!

ALBA. You are afraid for the man you love?

DOLORÈS. Monseigneur!

ALBA. But he will kill this man—remember, now.

DOLORÈS. Yes!

ALBA. He is a heretic!

NOIR. A rebel!

VARGAS. A traitor!

DOLORÈS. Yes!

ALBA [*quickly*]. Your husband?

VARGAS. Rysoor?

DOLORÈS [*terror-stricken, as she falls back toward the table*]. I—didn't say that!

ALBA. No, but I suspect it. So, he is your husband? [*To DELRIO.*] Write: "Rysoor."

DOLORÈS. Monseigneur, this is terrible—you are making me sell my soul.

ALBA. On the contrary, I am saving it; you are doing this for your King and your God! Now, the others?

DOLORÈS. What others?

VARGAS. The other conspirators?

ALBA. Their names—come, now!

DOLORÈS. But I have nothing against them! I don't want to tell their names!

ALBA. You will please let us have all the names.

DOLORÈS. But I don't want to—that would be too infamous—they are all innocent! To begin with, I don't know them——

ALBA [*calmly*]. You know them—you have just told us that. What are their names?

DOLORÈS [*coming down-stage*]. Let me go! I want to leave here—now! Let me go!

ALBA [*violently retaining her, and forcing her to her knees*]. You are not going! You are to stay here! Now, tell us!

DOLORÈS [*distracted with fear*]. Monseigneur, pity me!

ALBA. The names!

DOLORÈS. Never!

ALBA [*taking hold of her arms, he raises her so that she catches sight of MAÎTRE CHARLES, who has come down-stage at the left*]. Their names! Their names! You poor, God-forsaken woman, speak, or we shall have the executioner make you!

DOLORÈS [*faint with fear at seeing the executioner*]. O God! My God! Why did I come?

ALBA [*twisting her wrists as she hesitates to reply*]. You were saying——

DOLORÈS [*she murmurs in an undertone*]. Galèna!

ALBA [*to NOIRCARMES*]. Galèna!

NOIR. [*to DELRIO*]. Galèna!

ALBA. Then?

DOLORÈS [*as before*]. Bakkerzeel—I think—I think—I am not sure.

ALBA [*to NOIRCARMES*]. Bakkerzeel!

NOIR. [*to DELRIO*]. Bakkerzeel!

VARGAS. And——?

DOLORÈS [*nearly exhausted*]. I don't know!

ALBA. Maître Charles!

DOLORÈS [*sobbing in desperation*]. My God! forgive me! forgive me!

ALBA. One more—and I will release you.

DOLORÈS. The bellringer, Jonas.

[DELRIO *inscribes the name.*]

ALBA. And Cornélis, too, eh?

DOLORÈS. Yes—I believe so. Oh, I'm dying!
[*She falls down, utterly worn out.*]

ALBA [*letting her hand drop, as he says cold-bloodedly*]. These will be sufficient! [*He goes up-stage and writes. To VARGAS.*] Send this to Navarra.
[*To NOIRCARMES.*] Send this to Francisco Vegas!

NOIR. [*in an undertone*]. Very well, Monseigneur. I shall have some one run off immediately.

[*They all start to go.*]

ALBA [*stopping them with a gesture*]. In the name of heaven, no! Not a word—and the calm of death!

NOIR. Good, Monseigneur! But how about the chains?

ALBA. Down—as ordered!

NOIR. But the captain?

ALBA. Ah, that is another matter. Get this Karloo, alive or dead!

DOLORÈS [*rising*]. Karloo?

NOIR. And hang him?

ALBA. No, save him for the scaffold!

DOLORÈS [*on her knees, deadly pale*]. The scaffold! Karloo?

NOIR. [*ready, together with DELRIO and MAÎTRE CHARLES, at the left*]. Van der Noot!

VARGAS [*pointing to the sword on the table*]. The man with the sword.

DOLORÈS. He! It's he! It is—— Oh, God in heaven! *He* is in it! My Karloo! And I have—— No, no, no, not that! [*She attempts to get to the door.*]

ALBA [*barring her way and retaining her by force*]. I beg your pardon! You are not to leave until you have orders to do so!

DOLORÈS [*struggling to free herself*]. Let me go—you! Let me go! I want to go!

ALBA. Go, Messieurs, and have guards stationed at every gate.

[*They go out. VARGAS leaves by the side-door on the left.*]

DOLORÈS. Butchers! Wretches! Hangdogs!

ALBA [*throwing her aside, toward the left*]. It is eleven o'clock, Madame; you may leave at day-break.

DOLORÈS. After you have arrested him, you——

[*The Duke stops and looks at her with a threatening glance.*]

No, forgive me, Monseigneur! [*She clings to him.*]

Have pity on him! Pity him! Take them all, but not him! Not my Karloo!

ALBA [*disengaging himself and pushing her aside*]. Pray for him—that is the best thing for you to do! [*He goes out at the right, closing the door. The door is double-locked; the sound of the turning key is heard.*]

DOLORES [*she throws herself against the door*]. No, wait! Monseigneur! [*She beats on the door, trying to break through it.*] Open the door! Help! Help! Now it's all over! I have killed him! [*Sobbing.*] How wretched I am—and I have killed him! I have killed him! [*She falls down, quite worn out.*]

SCENE II: *The interior of the Brussels Town Hall.*

At the back above the level of the stage is the Great Hall, the windows of which shine in the moonlight. Down-stage is a tower room, under the belfry. These two sections of the stage are connected by two staircases, one to the right, the other to the left. Between these staircases, in the middle of the stage, is an archway which leads from the upper room to the floor. Down-stage to the right is a large door giving access to another part of the building by means of a staircase of five steps. This staircase is open on three sides.

To the left is a door opening upon the stairs to the belfry. Here and there are mutilated statues and débris, indications of the fact that the Hall has been pillaged. To the left is a stone table. It is night, but the stage is illuminated by reflected moonlight. JONAS and GALÈNA appear under the archway at the back; JONAS is ahead, and carries a lantern, also two swords and a hatchet under his arm.

JONAS [*lighting the way for GALÈNA*]. This way, Seigneur Galèna!

GALÈNA. Where are you taking me?

JONAS. Under the belfry, your Honour. Here is the staircase leading to the bells.

GALÈNA. Oh, yes, now I know where I am.

JONAS. Up there is the Great Hall, where our masters of the Commune used to deliberate.

GALÈNA. And now—what neglect and ruin!

JONAS. It's easy to see that the Spanish señors have passed this way! [*Turning his lantern in the direction of the damaged statues.*] See—our poor burgomasters!

GALÈNA. Patience! Those dead will resume their places again—and the living, too! Are you sure no one ever comes here?

JONAS. No one but myself. [*He lays the swords on the table.*] At any rate, here are weapons for us. I cleaned them purposely for carnival time.

GALÈNA. Will you fight, too?

JONAS. To protect my bells! Indeed, I will! [*He lays the lantern on the table.*]

GALÈNA. Sh! Did you hear?

JONAS [*pointing to the right*]. There?

GALÈNA. Yes!

Enter RYSOOR, from the right.

RYS. Is that you, Galèna?

GALÈNA. Yes.

RYS. Is Karloo here?

[*KARLOO appears at the back.*]

KARLOO. Have patience, friends! Here he is.

RYS. Ah! welcome!

GALÈNA. What news?

KARLOO. The best.

GALÈNA. The Spaniards?

KARLOO. Safe! I have just come from the Duke's.

RYS. And the chains?

KARLOO. Let down with my own hands!

RYSOOR and GALÈNA [*joyfully*]. Good!

RYS. Then nothing is suspected at the Palace? How about the road?

KARLOO. No danger. The usual sentinels and patrols! On the Place there is a guard of only fifty men, half of them asleep around the fire, while the other half are trying to sober down after their *Mardi-gras* debauch.

RYS. Your musketeers?

KARLOO. All ready! From the Hôtel de Nassau as far as the Grand-Marché I gave the signal agreed on at more than fifty doors, and every one gave back the answer: "We are ready!" Bakkerzeel, who is on guard below, has left all his weavers at the Porte de Flandre, hiding in their cellars. Lalos stationed his brewers on the lookout under some sheds. Throughout this sad and silent city, where not a ray of light shines from a window, where the snow deadens the sound of everything, even our footsteps, there is no house but has its eyes peering in the black of the night, its ears pricked up—fully armed—impatient for battle.

RYS. Let us make ready, friends; the hour is near. Galèna, warn Cornélis and our friends who are waiting under the arcades. Let them all join us, and then—forward!

GALÈNA. I shall go at once. [*To JONAS.*] Come, Jonas! [*They go out at the back.*]

RYS. [*after laying his cape and hat on the table*]. And now, Karloo, let me tell you what I expect of you.

KARLOO. Tell me!

RYS. I have named this rendezvous for all our leaders, because it is the Town Hall, the communal meeting-place of the people.

KARLOO. I understand.

RYS. In this place, Karloo, our fathers framed the laws which we are about to defend. From these very windows they proclaimed those rights which we are about to assert once more! This is the very heart of the city, of which the Spaniards have made a corpse. Now let this corpse live again! May it rise up in the night, magnificent with the flare of our torches and our bare swords, and cry, "To arms!" at the call from every bell! Then will this disheartened people know that Flemish liberty still exists—its great soul stirs again—beneath our roofs! The people know what they are struggling for: for our flag—for the ringing bells. They are the spirit of the city! Better still, the nation; best of all, the *Patrie*! And they will fight and die for Her, for She

says to them: "Defend me, oh, my sons, and save me, for I am being crushed—and I am your mother!"

KARLOO. Indeed she is.

RYS. Here, then, Karloo, is the centre of the struggle; here must we take our stand at any cost, until the Liberator arrives! I leave this sacred building in your care. Command it, defend it.

KARLOO. In yours, rather.

RYS. No, no! I have not yet won the right, as you have at Saint-Quentin and Gravelines, to lead these brave men to battle. Karloo, I shall follow you; you must march at their head! You are the only one who can teach them to conquer; *I* can but teach them to die.

KARLOO. Very well, since you wish it; but if I consent, the honor will be yours as well as mine, while for me the danger is merely greater.

RYS. Your sword?

KARLOO. It was taken from me at the Palace!

RYS. Then take this! [*He takes the sword lying on the table, and is about to give it to KARLOO, who extends his ungloved hand to receive it. RYSOOR takes the hand and utters a cry.*] Ah!

KARLOO [*surprised*]. What is the matter?

RYS. [*looking at him, very pale*]. That hand!

KARLOO. Yes?

RYS. [*leading KARLOO to the table, and examining the palm of his hand by lantern light*]. This wound?

KARLOO. Ah, yes; it is only a trifle; my arm can still do its duty.

RYS. [*as before*]. And you? Have you done yours?

KARLOO [*uneasily*]. Rysoor, what do you mean?

RYS. This wound? How did you get it?

KARLOO [*hesitating*]. I was careless with a sword.

RYS. A Spanish soldier, was he not?

KARLOO. Why?

RYS. At night—at my home?

KARLOO [*terrified*]. Oh!

RYS. [*bursting forth*]. You miserable——! It is you!

KARLOO. Rysoor!

RYS. [*raising the sword*]. You thief of love! Destroyer of my honor! I have a right to kill you!

KARLOO [*desperately, as he falls on his knees*]. Kill me, then! Death at your hands would be the sweetest of tortures! Kill me! You have every right! Kill me!

RYS. Blackguard, you think you can soften me!

KARLOO. For God's sake, kill me, Rysoor; only kill me at once! Your words wound me far more than the cold steel of your sword could possibly do! Yes,

I am a blackguard and a coward! I have deceived you—it was infamous; I confess, and I now weep tears of blood! Death! I ask you for it on bended knees—death!

RYS. [*letting his sword fall and looking down, as he sobs in desperation*]. I am so unhappy! I loved you too much—and for this woman! That was horrible enough, but that of all men it should be *you* who—— You, Karloo—Karlo, to whom I have unburdened my whole heart! And loved you as a son! What poison is there in your love for this woman that turns a loyal and generous soul like yours to a festering mass of treason and ingratitude? I had faith in but three things: the *Patrie*, her, and you! You see what remains—and it is your fault! Only tell me—tell me what I have done to you, that you should make me suffer as I do?

KARLOO. You are torturing me! This is frightful! Stop! Don't reproach me this way!

RYS. What if I do kill you? Will your death give me back my honor? My peace that has been destroyed? Will it heal the wound which is now sapping my life's blood?

KARLOO. My God! You still insist——

RYS. What good will your death do me? Satisfy

my desire for revenge? Will it serve the cause which we are now defending?

KARLOO. Do you want.—

RYS. Will your dead body lead these men into battle?

KARLOO. I am no longer worthy!

RYS. Worthy or not, does your blood belong to me? When the whole city has scarcely enough in its veins for to-night's struggle! Should it waste these precious drops, should I strike low this arm of yours which must defend us all? Great God, no! If I did that, I should be guilty of treason as great against Her as yours is against me. I have no more right to rob Her of your courage than you have to deprive me of my happiness!

KARLOO. Then you refuse?

RYS. Make ready, and take that sword!

KARLOO. I?

RYS. Take that sword, I tell you, and go battle! Go where your duty calls, where my duty sends you! If God will that you die, do not die like a criminal, but like a martyr, like a soldier. Then at least your death will have served some cause!

KARLOO [*dejectedly taking the sword*]. You will never again see me living: that I swear to you!

RYS. [*quickly*]. Living? Very well, it makes no difference, so long as you conquer!

KARLOO [*standing up, warmly*]. That gives me some hope of forgiveness, Rysoor!

RYS. Go, now—and take revenge on yourself. You have robbed me of my honor; give me my liberty! A woman, ha! Give me back my *Patrie*! We shall see later whether your bravery has washed clean your crime, and whether I ought to be grateful to you or hate you!

KARLOO. You will forgive me, Rysoor! I will make you! [*To his sword.*] Ready, now, and help me win my cause!

Enter GALÈNA, BAKKERZEEL, CORNÉLIS, JONAS, and other conspirators armed.

GALÈNA. Rysoor, all the men are below, waiting for the signal. It is time now.

RYS. [*pointing to KARLOO*]. Karloo is to command you!

BAK. Karloo, here we are!

KARLOO. Are you all armed and ready?

ALL. All!

KARLOO. Ready to brave the stake, to face torture and death?

ALL. All of us!

KARLOO. To work, then! Now if the heart of one of you fail in the thick of the fight, remember that your defeat delivers your wives and children to the fury of the Spaniards! Think of your city being pillaged, your homes in ashes—and blame this infamous Spain!

ALL [*together in confused uproar*]. Yes, yes! To arms! Forward! Let us attack!

RYS. Silence! Listen!

[*There is a pause; the beat of Spanish drums is heard in the far distance.*]

KARLOO. The drum!

RYS. Beating the charge!

JONAS [*running down from the back of the stage*].
The Spaniards!

[*Gunshots are heard.*]

ALL. Treason!

KARLOO. Very well! Let us lose no time! Cry out in the Place: “To arms!” my friends! Ten thousand fighters will come forth out of the night in answer.

[*More gunshots; trumpets sound, and the beat of drums approaches, on the charge.*]

Guard the archway, Cornélis! Bakkerzeel, you the stairway!

GALÈNA [*from above*]. There they are on the Place!

KARLOO. Rysoor, watch this door! [*He points to the door at the right, to which RYSOOR quickly goes.*] And the signal! For God's sake, Jonas, the signal, or we are lost! [*To the others.*] You there, guard the windows!

[He rushes to the left stairway at the moment when JONAS disappears up the stairs leading to the belfry. Again the reports of muskets are heard. Just after KARLOO reaches the stairs with the conspirators, a troop of Spaniards under the leadership of NOIR-CARMES appears in the large hall above, flags flying, drums and trumpets sounding the charge. The conspirators, who number more than a dozen, return from the stairs and make their way headlong to the archway, whence CORNÉLIS and his men are flung, while BAKKERZEEL and his companions defend the stairway on the right. More shots are heard.]

KARLOO. To the Great Gate!

[He springs forward with his men to the principal doorway, on the right; this he tries to open, but cannot. At the same time the door

leading to the belfry opens, and a company of Spaniards, led by MIGUEL, comes forth, with JONAS in their midst, his hands bound. This company fires on the conspirators, who are forced back to the stairs leading to the principal entrance, leaving their dead where they fell.]

RYS. [*showering blows on the closed door*]. This door!

KARLOO. Break it in! [*He takes a hatchet and beats furiously on the door.*]

NOIR. [*from above*]. Surrender!

KARLOO [*who continues his task*]. Never! Long live Flanders!

ALL THE CONSPIRATORS. Long live Flanders!

NOIR. [*to his men*]. Fire!

[The Spaniards fire. Seven or eight conspirators fall dead or wounded on the steps.]

KARLOO [*as before*]. Fire!

[The conspirators return the volley. The Spaniards, who were advancing, now retreat. On the side of the conspirators only RYSOOR, KARLOO, GALÈNA, BAKKERZEEL, and five others remain standing.]

RYS. Courage, Karloo!

KARLOO [*finally breaking the lock*]. The door is giving!

[*The door falls outward, causing considerable uproar. They rush forward, but fall back a moment later before other soldiers who advance against them. KARLOO is armed only with the hatchet; RYSOOR and the others retreat toward the centre of the stage, forming a little group. They have only swords with which to defend themselves.*]

NOIR. [*raising his staff*]. Forward!

[*They charge again. All the Spaniards descend the great stairs at the back in a body, and surround the conspirators with a circle of steel and muskets.*]

RYS. Now we have only to die!

KARLOO. Fire, you cowards—fire! You see, we will not surrender!

[*They throw down their weapons. NOIRCARMES raises his sword to give the signal to fire as ALBA appears at the head of the stairway, in full battle array, his commanding baton in hand. Behind him are his officers. LA TRÉMOÏLLE is among these. ALBA stretches forth his baton; the drums cease*

beating, the trumpets are silent, every musket is lowered.]

ALBA [*to the conspirators, after a pause*]. Which of you, Messieurs, do you consider your leader?

KARLOO. I!

RYS. [*interrupting him*]. In battle, yes, but here—it is I! Comte de Rysoor!

ALBA. Very well, Monsieur le Comte. Now that we are in a position to receive William of Orange we shall ask him to enter the city—[*consternation among the conspirators*—and then make an end to the rebellion by depriving him of his head.

RYS. [*anxiously, to KARLOO*]. Ah! if he enters he is lost.

ALBA. What signal have you agreed on?

RYSOOR [*hopefully*]. Thank God, you don't know that, hangdog!

ALBA. Rincon, bring me the bellringer Jonas.

[JONAS is brought forth from the foot of the stairs, bound.]

Do you know the signal?

JONAS [*trembling*]. Yes, Monseigneur!

ALBA. Loose his hands, and let him sound it.

[*A soldier unties JONAS's hands.*]

KARLOO [*quickly*]. Jonas, don't do it!

RYSOOR. Don't!

JONAS [*terror-stricken*]. I'm only a poor man, Messieurs. They'll kill me, and I have a wife and children!

KARLOO [*supplicating him*]. There are three million souls to save! Your children are among them!

RYs. Save the Prince!

KARLOO. Save Flanders!

RYs. On my bended knees, Jonas. I beg you on bended knees——

JONAS [*who, after being free, has been taken to the left by RINCON*]. My God! My God!

ALBA [*furiously*]. Put an end to this!

THE CONSPIRATORS [*intercepting JONAS, clinging to him as he is being taken out into the passage*]. Jonas—don't ring!

ALBA [*to RINCON*]. Put a pistol to his throat; if he winces, kill him!

[*JONAS is dragged to the staircase leading to the belfry. The conspirators hang back, and appear desperate.*]

ALBA. Has everything been made ready, Noircarnes?

NOIR. Oh, Monseigneur, the moment the Prince

enters the city he will find himself between two fires: not a man will get as far as the Place.

ALBA [*triumphantly*]. At last I have him between my fingers!

RYS. Good God, merciful Saviour, do not allow this iniquity! Save the Prince, save him! Thou owest us at least that much!

[*There is a pause, then the bell rings. Every one listens anxiously. The death-knell strikes. The conspirators cannot restrain a movement of joy.*]

ALBA [*nervously, as he looks at the conspirators*]. The death-knell!

NOIR. Yes, Monseigneur.

ALBA. Is *that* the signal?

KARLOO [*radiantly*]. Yes, Monsieur le Duc, that is the signal, but it says to the Prince: "Do not enter—go away!" It is the signal that saves him, and with him the liberty of Flanders!

ALBA [*furiously*]. By the fires of hell, stop that man! Kill him, kill him! Kill him! I say.

[*A gunshot is heard in the belfry. The bell stops ringing.*]

NOIR. It is done!

ALBA. But too late—he will escape. I must wait for another chance!

[Four soldiers enter from the staircase leading to the belfry, carrying the body of JONAS on their muskets.]

RINCON *[stopping the soldiers, and raising the mantle which covers JONAS, to see whether the man is dead]*. He is dead, Monsieur le Duc!

RYS. *[taking off his hat before the body, as do all the conspirators]*. Poor obscure martyr, we honor you! One second's deed has made a martyr of you! May our children revere your memory and, when they are free, take thought of the humble bellringer to whom they will owe their freedom.

[JONAS's body is carried under the archway.]
Come, Messieurs, on this beautiful night only *we* are lost! Long live Flanders!

THE CONSPIRATORS. Long live Flanders!

ALBA. Take away these men, Noircarmes—the scaffold on the Place, there—to-night, and every night hereafter!

[The conspirators are surrounded and conducted up the large staircase to the left.]

LA TRÉMOÏLLE *[as they mount the first steps]*. Messieurs—*[they stop and turn around]*—I salute you—

and I have but one regret: to be deprived of the honor of being one of your number.

ALBA. Marquis!

LA TRÉMOÏLLE [*putting on his hat again and looking straight at the Duke*]. For all the gold of my ransom, Monsieur le Duc, I would not say the same to *you*!

[*The conspirators ascend the staircase between two files of soldiers. Drums beat, and trumpets sound, as the curtain falls.*]

Curtain.



ACT IV

ACT IV

SCENE I: *A room in the Palace contiguous to the Court of Blood. Down-stage to the right, opening upon a small platform leading to the stage by two steps, is the entrance to the Court. To the left is a door leading to the apartments of the Duke of Alba. Halfway up-stage, right, is an alcove; to the left is another, similar to that on the opposite side. In the centre is a large table covered with a black cloth; there is a chair to the right and one to the left of this table. At the back of the stage is a large fireplace, above which hang the arms of the House of Austria. Mural paintings adorn the walls, representing martyrs and saints. There is a sombre, sinister air about the whole room. It is daytime. ALBA, NOIRCARMES, VARGAS, and RINCON are present as the curtain rises. There is also a soldier at the door of the left alcove.*

ALBA. Noircarmes!

NOIR. Monseigneur?

ALBA [*who has just come from the chamber of torture and walked in silence to a position in front of the table*].

What is the time?

NOIR. Seven o'clock, Monsieur le Duc.

ALBA. Is everything ready on the Place?

NOIR. Yes, Monseigneur.

ALBA. The scaffold? The faggots?

NOIR. The scaffold is just being erected.

ALBA. Rincon, the Lombard regiment on the Place, as when Egmont and Horn were disposed of.

RINCON. Very well, Monsieur le Duc.

ALBA. The Sardinian regiment will guard all the city gates, which are now being closed, and which will not be opened again until after the execution. The Sicilian and Neapolitan regiments will perform their usual duties. Serbelloni will place cannons loaded with grapeshot at every entrance to the Grande-Place. That will do!

[RINCON *goes out through alcove at the right*.]

VARGAS. Monseigneur, the Ambassador from France has received the ransom for Monsieur de la Trémoille on a bill through the House of Fuggers at Augsburg.

ALBA [*signing a passport which lies on the table*]. A passport to Lille for this Frenchman. Let him leave

the place immediately. [*He gives VARGAS the passport.*]

VARGAS. Very well, Monseigneur. [*He goes to the soldier, hands him the passport, and returns down-stage, as the soldier goes out.*]

ALBA [*seated at the right of the table*]. Noircarmes, we must know more about this matter; here is an entire city in revolt—we have only this handful of men; the rest are at large. I must have their names! Their names, I say! if we have to execute half the citizens——

NOIR. We shall see to that, Monseigneur.

ALBA. I count on your doing so! This Rysoor, for instance, the soul of the conspiracy—tell Maître Charles that *he* must be questioned in an exquisite manner—even if he dies on the rack! If our old methods of inquisition fail to produce results, let him invent new ones!

NOIR. Maître Charles shall be informed, Monsieur le Duc.

[*He goes out into the inquisition chamber.*]

ALBA. By the way, is that woman—his wife——

VARGAS. We found her in your Excellency's room—she had fainted—she looked as if she were dead. We tried to prevent her leaving the Palace,

but her cries were so terrible that we were afraid Doña Rafaële——

ALBA [*rising and speaking quickly*]. Good God! my daughter must know nothing of all this.

VARGAS. That goes without saying, Monseigneur.

ALBA. Are you sure she heard nothing this evening?

VARGAS. I believe so, Monseigneur. In any event, Maître Alberti can tell her——

ALBA. Yes, yes, tell the doctor to come here—— at once! And that woman, too! Bring her! I want to have done with her once for all!

VARGAS. Very well, Monseigneur. [*He goes out through the alcove to the left.*]

Enter ALBERTI through the door down-stage to the left.

ALBA [*going quickly to the doctor; quietly and anxiously*]. Maître Alberti, how is our patient?

ALBERTI. Passing a better night than I had anticipated, Monseigneur.

ALBA [*pressing ALBERTI's hands*]. Thank you, Alberti, for this good news! She heard nothing of the drums, or the fusillades?

ALBERTI. Nothing, Monsieur le Duc—fortunately! But I cannot conceal from your Excellency that the

preparations now under way make me very apprehensive for Doña Rafaële.

ALBA. Ah!

[DOLORÈS enters through the alcove to the left, followed by VARGAS. She crosses the stage between the fireplace and the table. She has heard the last words of ALBERTI. The Duke does not notice her presence.]

ALBERTI. In her present condition, the slightest emotional strain might prove fatal. Your Excellency was able to calm her only by promising to sacrifice no more victims, and if she were to learn that this morning five men were burned on the Place——

DOLORÈS [*aside, terror-stricken*]. This morning?

ALBA [*quickly*]. She need not know.

ALBERTI. No—that would kill her!

ALBA [*as before*]. She shall not know! Alberti, have her wakened!

ALBERTI. She is already awake, Monseigneur.

ALBA. Then let her women dress her, at once! Order a chair, and have her taken to the Convent of Groenendaal, where she shall remain until to-night.

ALBERTI. Very well, Monseigneur—at once!

ALBA [*intercepting him as he turns to go*]. You will

save her for me, Alberti—promise me you will save her?

ALBERTI. With the help of God, Monseigneur!

ALBA [*accompanying him to the door*]. Yes, yes, you will save her. I will cover you with medals and honors! I will make you the greatest doctor in Christendom! Now go, dear Alberti, go! You know how much I think of you—quickly, now!

[ALBERTI *goes out through the same door by which he entered*. ALBA *turns round and sees DOLORÈS*. He makes a sign to VARGAS, who goes out through the alcove to the left, and then addresses DOLORÈS in a brusque and harsh manner.]

ALBA. Now, Madame, your case! You want to save Karloo's life, do you not? Well, you cannot!

DOLORÈS. Monseigneur!

ALBA. You cannot! The man is a traitor—he has been caught red-handed, sword in hand. He deserves to die, and he shall die! Spare me your tears and entreaties!

DOLORÈS. My tears! I have no more! I have been crying all night!

ALBA. Well?

DOLORÈS. Monsieur le Duc, this is infamous!

ALBA. Madame!

DOLORÈS. Infamous! I came to you this evening, and made a bargain with you. Deny it! I said to you: "There is a man I love; some one wants to kill him, and you, too! Give me his life for yours! Save his life, and I will save yours!" Did I say that, did I?

ALBA. If heaven has seen fit——

DOLORÈS. Heaven has nothing to do with this. Let us stay in this hell where we are, you and I! I have kept my promise, I, a woman! You are the Duke of Alba, a nobleman of Spain, commander-in-chief of the Netherlands! If you fail to keep your promise with me you are not even a gentleman. I implore you to keep your word as a man of honor!

ALBA. Listen to me, Madame! If any one but you dared address me in this way, he would never leave this place alive! As a matter of fact, you have rendered a service to His Majesty!

DOLORÈS. To you!

ALBA. To me? Very well—and to prove that I realize it—you are still here!

DOLORÈS. Ah, why not arrest me, and make your infamy complete?

ALBA. And why not?

DOLORÈS. You dare a great deal, Monsieur le Duc, but you would not do that!

ALBA. Perhaps I would. Now, since we are on the subject of honor, where I allow no one to instruct me, let me tell you that I never, never promised you the life of this man—never!

DOLORÈS. When you encouraged me to betray all the others for his sake, wasn't that a promise? And the leader of them all—do you know who he was?

ALBA. You have just condemned him! You were pleading here for your lover, when you should have thrown yourself at my feet for your husband.

DOLORÈS. This is horrible! I know it better than you—but that you should blame me! By now you would have been dragged through the gutters of the city, with a rope round your neck. [*The Duke starts.*] Come, now, you know that would have happened, unless I had been a faithless wife, a woman mad with love! You are an accomplice in my crime, you who reap the benefit!

ALBA. Ah!

DOLORÈS. You alone! Yes, you! Now, Monsieur le Duc, let us not play the hypocrite, you and I; you are as bad as I! I have done something awful—

to tell the secret of these poor men, and sell it to you; but you must admit that it is atrocious for you to catch them in your net and then shed their blood in the public square! That is your passion: despotism! Mine was adultery! We are equally guilty; both are implicated in the same murder! Only I denounce while you execute; I am the greater coward of the two, you the more ferocious. That is the only difference!

ALBA. Madame, take care!

DOLORÈS. No, I am mistaken: you are the cleverer, for you get all the spoils. Well, I want my share. If you don't give it to me, I will cry from the house-top that the Duke of Alba is a coward, he puts the dagger in your hand, and, when the deed is done, refuses to pay you!

ALBA [*enraged*]. Then you will——

DOLORÈS [*losing her self-control*]. I want my share! I want it! I have saved you, you and your army. I have delivered three million souls into your hands, bound hand and foot, and you refuse me the life of a single man! Monseigneur, you must be mad! Give him to me—pay me! Then we shall be even!

ALBA. We are now. I am not condemning him,

but you, for, as I have been listening to you, I have condemned you to death three times!

DOLORÈS. Me?

ALBA [*bursting forth*]. Leave this room—leave it! leave it! I say. The man is going to die! And if you say another word—[*he points to the torture chamber*—I will torture you.

DOLORÈS [*terror-stricken*]. Oh, Monseigneur! Pity me! It was wrong to threaten, I haven't the right! I don't ask it—I beg you—I implore——

[*The Duke goes to the table and rings a bell.*]

Monseigneur, God doesn't pardon those who have no pity. For your daughter's sake, have pity on the man who saved your life!

ALBA [*calling*]. Vargas!

DOLORÈS [*desperately*]. Devil! I dug down to his heart—but *has* he a heart?

Enter VARGAS and ALBERTI.

ALBA [*to ALBERTI*]. Well?

ALBERTI. Monsieur le Duc, Doña Rafaële is ready. She is now coming—here she is——

DOLORÈS [*hopefully*]. Ah!

ALBA [*going quickly to meet his daughter*]. Not here! Take that woman out!

DOLORÈS. No, I will not go!

ALBA [*angrily*]. Vargas!

DOLORÈS [*pushing VARGAS away*]. I will not go! Don't touch me! I will tell her everything if you do!

ALBA [*terrible in his fury*]. One word and you die!

[*At the moment when VARGAS tries to drag DOLORÈS from the room, DOÑA RAFAËLE enters from the apartment on the left, with a nun and a maidservant. VARGAS falls back, and DOLORÈS remains standing where she was.*]

ALBA [*turning around. To his daughter, who comes in smiling, as he takes her in his arms*]. Ah, Rafaële, my darling girl—and all alone like this?

RAFAËLE [*gayly*]. You see? I feel very well this morning. [*She coughs. MAÎTRE ALBERTI takes the chair away from the left side of the table, and places it for her.*]

ALBA [*anxiously*]. But——

RAFAËLE. Oh, that is nothing! Is it, Maître Alberti?

ALBA. Did he tell you——

RAFAËLE. Yes; you want me to go to Groenendaal?

ALBA. You have not been out for so long!

RAFAËLE. It will be good for me!

ALBA. And you will come back to me in time for supper. Alberti, have the shawls and blankets been seen to?

ALBERTI [*pointing to the wraps of various sorts which the women are carrying*]. Yes, Monsieur le Duc.

ALBA. Well, go, then, dearest!

[DOLORÈS moves about, thus calling attention to herself.]

RAFAËLE. This evening, then! [*Seeing DOLORÈS—in an undertone.*] Oh, I had not seen this lady——

ALBA [*trying to usher his daughter out of the door*]. She—she is just a—a person of the town.

RAFAËLE [*standing her ground*]. She seems so sad—has she been crying?

ALBA [*again trying to urge her out*]. Possibly.

RAFAËLE [*aside to her father*]. Some poor woman who has asked you a favor?

ALBA. Yes—and now, good-bye!

RAFAËLE. See, I guessed! [*To her father, coquetishly.*] Don't you want to grant it?

ALBA. No, indeed.

RAFAËLE. But mine? Won't you grant mine?

ALBA. Yours?

RAFAËLE. I feel so well this morning—see how

easily I breathe! I have not felt so well for many a day.

ALBA [*joyfully*]. How glad I am! How profoundly happy!

RAFAËLE. You are happy, are you not?

ALBA. My God! yes!

RAFAËLE. Well, this happiness must not be for us alone, then; and to thank God for what we have received, please let this poor lady have what she asks for.

ALBA [*impatiently*]. I cannot. Now go.

RAFAËLE. Then it is something serious?

ALBA [*forgetting himself*]. Very!

RAFAËLE [*suddenly, and alarmed*]. Ah! something I know nothing about—something you are hiding from me?

ALBA [*quickly*]. Not at all!

RAFAËLE. But those drums last night? Those shots?

ALBA. Oh—nothing!

RAFAËLE [*casting a look of interrogation toward the two women*]. My God! and you promised me! If there were to be more killing——

ALBA [*quickly*]. I tell you there is nothing! Absolutely nothing! [*Looking at DOLORÈS angrily, and in an undertone.*] That damned woman!

RAFAËLE [*going quickly past her father*]. If there is nothing, then you can grant it. I shall speak to her. I——

ALBA. Rafaële!

RAFAËLE [*to her father*]. Let me be—I will! [*To DOLORÈS, as she sits on the chair to the left of the table.*] Will you tell me your trouble, Madame?

[*ALBA stands behind his daughter's chair, threatening DOLORÈS with a look.*]

DOLORÈS [*who is standing in front of the table—softly*]. Oh, Madame, it is simple enough: it is about a person who is known to your Grace: Captain Karloo.

RAFAËLE. I should think I do know him! Well?

DOLORÈS. Well, Señora, he was arrested last night——

[*The Duke starts.*]

RAFAËLE. Arrested?

DOLORÈS [*looking defiantly at the Duke*]. And on such a slight suspicion! Monsieur le Duc will tell you how unimportant it was.

RAFAËLE. Possibly that was what happened yesterday evening?

DOLORÈS. Probably—yes——

RAFAËLE [*reproachfully*]. Oh, Father, you are too severe!

DOLORÈS. Is he not?

RAFAËLE. Well, if this is all——

[ALBA goes behind his daughter, keeping his eyes fixed on DOLORÈS all the time.]

DOLORÈS. That is all; his Excellency himself cannot tell you of a single other thing——

RAFAËLE. And, of course, you ask——

DOLORÈS. Madame, I ask that he be released from prison and given a passport from his Excellency—that is all!

RAFAËLE. You are right. [*The Duke starts.*] Father, Madame is just and reasonable. It is very kind of you, Madame, to do that for him. Are you a friend of his?

DOLORÈS. Yes, Señora, he is my lover!

RAFAËLE. Good! He deserves to be loved. I think a great deal of him, too. Now, Madame, that two of us are on his side, we shall be stronger.

DOLORÈS. My God! I hope your father will listen!

RAFAËLE [*rising*]. See how easily he will be influenced! Father, Monsieur de Vargas will release our Captain, will he not? This is a small matter to you——

ALBA [*ironically*]. Ah, yes, indeed!

RAFAËLE [*quickly*]. Did you say yes?

ALBA. No, I say—no!

RAFAËLE [*anxiously*]. Then I have not been told the truth! Madame, tell me the whole truth!

ALBA [*quickly coming between the two women*]. She shall say nothing more, as there is nothing more to say.

DOLORÈS. Nothing, indeed!

RAFAËLE [*wrought up*]. Then you refuse? Father, you are very cruel!

ALBA. Rafaële!

RAFAËLE. I was so happy! And now—oh, the day began so beautifully! [*She falls into a chair. ALBERTI goes to her.*]

ALBA [*in desperation, as he kneels at his daughter's feet*]. My dear girl! Maître Alberti! [*To DOLORÈS, his voice choked.*] You fiend!

DOLORÈS [*braving him, as she leans over him, in an undertone*]. I use what weapons I can find!

ALBA [*to his daughter*]. Rafaële, my dearest!

RAFAËLE [*coughing*]. I was so well! My God!

ALBA. You will feel better at once, my treasure!

RAFAËLE [*with tenderness*]. If you will only do what I asked——

ALBA. Anything!

RAFAËLE [*half rising*]. Truly? Do you mean it this time?

ALBA. Yes.

RAFAËLE. Is he free?

ALBA. Yes.

RAFAËLE. Will you swear it?

ALBA. On your life!

RAFAËLE [*she rises, goes to the table, takes a pen and offers it to the Duke*]. Write it at once! At once! Here!

[ALBA rises, takes the pen, and writes as he stands.]

DOLORÈS [*falling on her knees before RAFAËLE*]. Ah, Señora, may God recompense you! Thank you, with all my heart!

RAFAËLE. Are you crying for so small a matter?

DOLORÈS [*quickly*]. You seem to be suffering so!

RAFAËLE [*whispering in her ear*]. I seemed a little worse than I was!

DOLORÈS [*kissing her hands*]. You angel!

RAFAËLE. Shh! [RAFAËLE returns to the left, where, during the following, the women give her her mantle.]

ALBA [*to VARGAS*]. Vargas, here is an order releasing Captain Karloo. Give him a passport to Lille.

DOLORÈS. Oh, Monseigneur!

ALBA [*going to DOLORÈS, above the table, and saying to her in an undertone*]. Do not thank me, Madame, for a favor which you have forced from me, but thank heaven for it! You have until this evening, you and he, to leave the city! [*Indicating the table.*] Your passport is there. [*He returns to his daughter.*] Now, Rafaële, come while I put you in your carriage myself.

RAFAËLE [*to DOLORÈS*]. Adieu, Madame. [*To the Duke.*] See how easy it is to be good? Ah, if you would only listen to me! If I were always with you!

[*They go out, left.*]

DOLORÈS [*taking her passport from the table*]. Now threaten if you like—he is saved! [*To VARGAS.*] Monsieur, may I see——

VARGAS. Captain Karloo? No, Madame; you will find him at the gates.

DOLORÈS. Very well! [*As she is about to leave by the alcove at the left, she stops.*] Who are those men passing by over there?

VARGAS [*looking*]. The prisoners coming from the court. They are being taken back to their prison.

DOLORÈS [*with an exclamation of terror*]. I don't

want to see them! [*She comes down-stage and crosses toward the door at the right.*]

VARGAS. Not that way, Madame; that is the torture chamber!

DOLORÈS [*stepping back in terror*]. Oh!

VARGAS [*pointing to the alcove to the right*]. This side, please!

DOLORÈS. Oh, yes—I want to go! [*She stops short and looks at VARGAS.*] Who is that man coming in?

VARGAS. The Comte de Rysoor.

DOLORÈS [*terrified, she comes down-stage and crosses to the left*]. I don't want to see him, Monsieur! Monsieur, I am so afraid—let me go. Monsieur, I *must* not see that man! I shall always see him in my dreams! He's coming! [*Desperately.*] Can't I leave this horrible house?

VARGAS [*indicating the door to the right*]. That way, Madame; only do not cross the Duke's path!

DOLORÈS. The Duke—hangdog—devil! I am willing to meet him, to pass through hell—everything—only I must not meet *that* man! My God, not him!

[*She goes out at the left, as RINCON enters. He is followed by soldiers, who stand back in the alcove, and RYSOOR, to whom he first beckons.*]

RYSOOR. Where are you leading me, Captain, and why am I separated from the others?

RINCON. Because they are already disposed of, Monsieur, and—I am really sorry to say—you are not.

RYs. And what can possibly await me between the court and the stake?

RINCON. Alas, Monsieur le Comte, that room over there: the examination chamber.

RYs. Torture—ah, yes, I had forgotten—the Duke of Alba——

RINCON. If what I have been told is true, I advise you to summon up all your courage!

RYs. Do they hope they can force me to speak?

RINCON. They are sure.

RYs. [*after a pause*]. God knows I am not afraid to suffer! Pain and I are too good friends! But who can be sure that his body will not be weaker than his spirit? Possibly these tortures will wrest some cry, some confession, from me. Some name? Ah, Monsieur, the thought that suffering might make me betray a friend—that is *my* torture!

RINCON [*in an undertone*]. Then you would prefer of your own free will——

RYs. God! if I could kill myself.

RINCON. Then follow my advice: your lordship must not utter a sound nor move a single hair—we are being watched! Monsieur le Marquis de la Trémoille has arranged for this contingency.

RYS. [*hopefully*]. Ah!

RINCON. I shall escort you to the examination chamber. Now in the hallway, which is rather dark, extend your hand in my direction——

RYS. [*suddenly grasping his hand*]. Ah! Captain—thanks! For you and for him!

RINCON [*aloud*]. Perhaps your lordship would like a priest?

RYS. No, Captain, no! God alone is sufficient!

[KARLOO *enters through the alcove to the left, followed by MIGUEL and two soldiers. NARRA also comes in.*]

RYS. [*seeing KARLOO*]. Karloo! [*Aside to RINCON, as he says, pointing to the chamber of torture, terrified.*] He, too?

VARGAS *enters from the Duke's apartments.*

VARGAS [*to the officers*]. Messieurs, Captain Karloo is free.

RYS. [*joyfully*]. Free?

KARLOO. I? [*To VARGAS, as he comes quickly down-stage.*] And why am I free, and not Monsieur?

VARGAS. His Excellency, Monsieur, has deigned to grant you a pardon.

KARLOO. But I do not deign to accept it.

VARGAS. Monsieur!

KARLOO. By what right am I offered the insult of his mercy—mercy which I have not asked for?

VARGAS. It was a request of Doña Rafaële——

KARLOO. Not mine!

VARGAS. It is the Duke's pleasure!

KARLOO. But not my pleasure. I conspired, I fought, struggled with all my friends. The same conspiracy should lead to the same punishment: the scaffold! It is my right, and I demand it. I deny the Duke the right to impose upon me the torture of his pity!

VARGAS. Ah, Monsieur!

KARLOO. Come, Monsieur, I demand my scaffold, my stake, of which I am proud! I want no pity from you: it is an insult! Go to your Duke, Monsieur, and tell him that I wish to have nothing to do with his pardon!

VARGAS [*giving the passport to MIGUEL*]. You will tell him in person, Monsieur; I can only execute the orders which are given me.

[*He goes out, left. MIGUEL joins RINCON at the back, by the entrance of the alcove at the right. RYSOOR and KARLOO stand alone before the table.*]

KARLOO. Very well, where is he?

RYS. [*intercepting KARLOO*]. Are you going to do that?

KARLOO. Without the shadow of a doubt.

RYS. [*retaining him*]. Karloo!

KARLOO. Would *you* prevent me?

RYS. Great God, yes, I!

KARLOO. Rysoor, let me go!

RYS. Stay here, I say!

KARLOO. In the name of heaven, let me die! Let the executioner avenge you!

RYS. But what if I do not wish to be avenged by the executioner? [*Good-humoredly.*] How unfortunate for you, poor man, if I do not!

KARLOO. Can I accept your forgiveness without having deserved it? No, I say!

RYS. You will, I am sure, give me the right to administer forgiveness, and if, as you say, your crime has given me the right to dispose of your life——

KARLOO. Of course it has!

RYS. Very well, I am now disposing of it! I am not asking you to live: I command you!

KARLOO. Ah, Rysoor, I prefer your anger to this goodness, which is too much for me.

RYS. Karloo, I shall die soon. The miseries and mad passions of this earth seem like floating mists about to vanish as in a dream. Allow me this last happiness: to forget and forgive! Allow me to die without having lost faith in everything! Let the last hand I grasp be that of a friend—a hand that is the dearest to me because I had thought it the hand of a lost friend. . Let me find that friend again—cleansed and purified by tears and repentance!

KARLOO [*pressing and kissing RYSOOR's hands*]. My God, yes!

RYS. Live, Karloo, live—obey me! But above all, live in order to serve our sacred cause! Now, more than ever before, it has need of your devotion. Let your *Patrie* henceforward be your only love. She, Karloo, knows no deceits. She is an idol who will always be great and inspiring. Her cult is so pure that it can reconcile to a single faith two men so different as you and I, separated by a mortal hatred. You are still young, and will see our beloved Flanders a free land! Karloo, the day the flag of inde-

pendence floats above our ramparts, remember the old friend who fought at your side, and my spirit will bless you as joyfully as it now forgives you!

KARLOO. Oh, Rysoor, your forgiveness must not end with me; forgive her, too!

RYS. Her? [*Interrupting himself.*] No! I cannot do that! [*Forcefully.*] No, I cannot forgive her! I am not so far detached from humanity that I can smother an awful desire for revenge!

KARLOO. You!

RYS. It does not concern me alone! This time not I alone have been injured; but the whole people. She—no, I hardly believe God Himself would ask me to forget that!

KARLOO. Tell me!

RYS. [*lowering his voice in order not to be overheard by the soldiers*]. Karloo, we have been betrayed! There is one who is accursed among us, one who surprised our secrets and sold us!

KARLOO. Ah, otherwise——

RYS. We do not know who it is! Ignorant as we are, to-morrow perhaps he will renew his work; our most carefully thought-out plans may be in vain, and our best blood be shed, a whole people die in

agony and terror, because there is one fiend in our midst unpunished!

KARLOO. And you wish——

RYS. I wish—— Listen: this is my last will, Karloo, I bequeath to you a sacred duty——

KARLOO. Yes?

RYS. This traitor to his country, this dealer in our blood—find him, Karloo, find him! When you have him—no matter what his name or rank—crush him, have no pity for him. It will not be murder, but legitimate defence! Common justice! You will be defending not only your *Patrie*, which has been sold and crucified by him: you will be saving Her. So strike hard, my son, strike!

KARLOO. On my soul, I swear!

RYS. Take care! it is a sacred oath!

KARLOO. I swear!

RYS. No matter who the person may be?

KARLOO. On my hope of salvation—if I had to strike at my own fireside, at the foot of the altar! I have sworn to pierce his traitorous heart—with this hand!

RYS. Then you see how wise I was to save your life! It is saved for a purpose!

[*The door at the right opens and NOIRCARMES*

appears on the threshold, as well as the clerk and the court.]

KARLOO [*nervously*]. Are they coming?

RYS. [*seeing RINCON, who is coming down-stage*]. Yes—I know what they want!

KARLOO. What?

RYS. [*smiling to reassure KARLOO*]. It appears that Monsieur le Duc wishes to—question me!

KARLOO. You will return this way. I shall see you later!

RYS. [*his voice choked with emotion as he takes KARLOO's hand*]. Surely! Now, Karloo, my son, let us separate!

KARLOO [*apprehensively*]. I want to wait for you!

RYS. Don't stay here—it might be dangerous. Remember, your life does not belong to you! Think of what you have promised!

KARLOO [*still nervous*]. It seems as if you were saying good-bye for the last time!

RYS. [*smiling*]. Oh, no, indeed not! I firmly hope to see you again.

RINCON [*coming down-stage*]. Ready, Monsieur!

RYS. I am ready, Captain! [*To KARLOO, from the top of the steps*]. Remember your oath, Karloo! Remember!

[NOIRCARMES *reënters*. RYSOOR and RINCON disappear from the same side. The door is closed after them. The Ensign appears.]

KARLOO [*following them with his eyes*]. The way he spoke to me! What can the Duke want with him? Where are they taking him? [*He starts to mount the staircase.*]

MIGUEL [*stopping him*]. Careful, Monsieur, you must not go that way!

KARLOO. Very well, Monsieur, I shall wait!

MIGUEL. You may not wait here, either, Monsieur; you must go at once, please. Here is your passport.

KARLOO [*taking the passport*]. Please, Monsieur, I wish to wait until he comes out.

MIGUEL. Your friend? That may be a long time!

KARLOO [*uneasily*]. You think so?

MIGUEL. Surely—he is being questioned.

KARLOO [*in terror*]. Questioned? Saints of heaven! He lied to me, and I did not understand! What a fool I was! I must see him! [*He dashes forward, but officers bar his way.*]

MIGUEL. You are mad, Monsieur; you cannot go in there!

KARLOO [*desperate, as he struggles with the soldiers,*

who thrust him down-stage, left, behind the table just beyond the fireplace]. Let me go! I must see him once more!

MIGUEL [*who, together with the others, holds KARLOO fast*]. I tell you, Monsieur, you cannot go there!

[The door of the torture chamber opens, and

NOIRCARMES *appears.*]

KARLOO [*hopefully*]. They are coming back!

VARGAS [*reëntering from the Duke's apartments*].

Well, Noircarmes?

NOIRCARMES. It is over.

KARLOO [*joyfully*]. Already!

VARGAS. Did he confess?

NOIR. [*shrugging his shoulders*]. He said one word: "*Patrie!*" then he died!

KARLOO. Dead!

VARGAS [*to NOIRCARMES*]. What? Dead?

NOIR. On the threshold—he did it with this dagger. [*He throws a dagger on to the table.*]

KARLOO [*sobbing brokenly*]. My God! My God!

NOIR. [*to the officers*]. Really, Messieurs, you should search your prisoners with greater care!

VARGAS. Come to his Excellency!

KARLOO [*pale and calm, going to the table*]. Messieurs, do you wish to keep this dagger?

NOIR. [*surprised, as he looks at KARLOO*]. No, Monsieur, no.

KARLOO. Then will you allow me to keep it?

NOIR. As you like. [*They go out at the left.*]

KARLOO. Thank you!

[*He takes the dagger and goes out quickly, at the right. The soldiers look at him wonderingly.*]

SCENE II: *A square in the city. At the back of the stage, a flight of stairs, with a railing, rises at an oblique angle to the left, toward the higher part of the city, the roofs of which are seen, covered with half-melted snow, rising one above the other. This flight of stairs passes under the fortified gate, then turns and loses itself from view toward the right, in the direction of the church of Sainte-Gudule, the two towers of which can be seen above the roofs. To the right and left is a street; down-stage to the left is a small shop facing the stage. The interior can be seen only from the stage boxes. It is daytime. Drums are heard in the distance, beating a call to arms. Merchants, burghers, workmen, women, and children are conversing in undertones, as they walk back and forth down-stage; they accost one another*

as if in mortal terror of something. Soldiers come and go, singly and in patrols. A brewer, an innkeeper, and several women of the street may be distinguished, then MIGUEL and RINCON.

A WOMAN [*to another woman, in an undertone*].
The call to arms!

INNKEEPER [*also in an undertone*]. Yes, they will come this way!

A WOMAN SHOPKEEPER [*who is sitting on a chair down-stage to the left, in front of her shop*]. Have you been to see the Place du Marché?

A VOICE. No.

WOMAN SHOPKEEPER. A great heap of faggots, covered with black—it gives you goose-flesh to look at it!

BREWER. And those cannons all around, blocking every street!

A WORKMAN [*coming forward*]. Every gate of the city is closed, you know, until after the execution!

BREWER. They had to do that, to raise the prices—with this new tax of theirs!

WOMAN SHOPKEEPER. You'll see how bad business will be—worse, if possible, than before.

BREWER. Of course! You see the result of all

these attempts! Have to pull our belts tighter! We ought to turn our backs until it's all over!

[Enter KARLOO alone, quickly, at the right. Every one stops as he appears, and those who were speaking point at him. LA TRÉMOÏLLE enters behind KARLOO, booted and spurred, ready to leave the city. He plants himself in front of KARLOO, then stops him as he is about to make his way toward the left.]

LA TR. Captain, I have followed you from the Palace! Forgive me if I speak to you as if I were a friend. Where are you going? You look so pale, so hurried. Take my advice, and do not go in that direction!

KARLOO. Thank you, Monsieur, but this way I must go: to the Grande-Place, where I have some one to see.

LA TR. *[quickly]*. You will see only a most hideous spectacle! Please, Captain, let us wait in this deserted street until the gates are opened again! I have two good horses at the Porte de Flandre——

KARLOO. You speak as if you were a friend of twenty years, Monsieur, and I am heartily thankful for your kindness. But I really cannot accept your offer. The Comte de Rysoor is dead!

LA TR. I know!

KARLOO. But his widow does not! I must tell her. After that, I have a number of errands to do in the city.

LA TR. Captain, I am very sorry! Adieu, then!

KARLOO. Adieu! [*He starts to go out at the left.*]

LA TRÉMOÏLLE *keeps his eyes on him.*]

MIGUEL [*stopping KARLOO*]. Where are you going, Monsieur?

KARLOO. To the Grande-Place.

MIGUEL. Don't go there!

KARLOO. Why not?

MIGUEL. Not until the prisoners pass.

LA TR. [*to KARLOO, who returns*]. Now you must stay with me!

KARLOO. Yes, I must!

[*Excitement and cries are heard to the right.*]

Enter ALBERTI.

A VOICE [*off-stage*]. This way! This way!

ALBERTI [*who has entered from the left, goes to RINCON and MIGUEL, who stand in the middle of the square very much wrought up*]. Messieurs—Captain—come and help me! As I was taking his Excellency's daughter to the Convent of Groenendaal, we passed by the city gates; when Doña Rafaële saw the men

who had been hanged, she was so terrified that she would walk back, in spite of all I could do! Here she is—in this street! She insists on returning to the Palace. I beg you, Captain, conduct us there by a roundabout route.

[Drums are heard in the distance.]

RINCON. Very well, Monsieur. Bring your chair here at once. The procession has already left the Palace.

ALBERTI. This way, Señora, this way!

[RAFAËLE enters in her chair; the nun sits facing her. She is followed by women attendants and two pages.]

ALBERTI. Straight ahead?

RINCON. Straight ahead, but quickly!

RAFAËLE. Wait! *[They all stop.]*

ALBERTI. Why are you stopping, Señora? Let us go on!

RAFAËLE. Not yet! First, I want to know the meaning of all these crowds and soldiers and drums. What is happening here, Messieurs?

RINCON *[at a sign from ALBERTI]*. Nothing at all, Señora—the troops are being reviewed.

RAFAËLE. Ah!

[Trumpets are heard in the gateway.]

THE HERALD [*appearing*]. By order of the King our master, and his Excellency the Duke of Alba, be it known to the people of this city: it is commanded that you all kneel in silence as the rebels pass this way—[*murmurs from the crowd*—]—on pain of death. Glory be to God and to the King!

[*The Herald retires and a moment later is heard making the same proclamation in the distance.*]

RAFAËLE [*nervously*]. What does that man say?

ALBERTI. He says, Madame, that the people should make way for the troops here.

RAFAËLE. But he spoke of rebels——

ALBERTI. A mistake—he said nothing of the sort! Did he, Messieurs?

LA TR. Nothing at all, Señora.

ALBERTI. Now let us proceed.

RAFAËLE. I must get out.

ALBERTI. Madame!

RAFAËLE. I want to walk!

ALBERTI. I have orders——

RAFAËLE. To take orders from me, Monsieur! I wish it, do you understand? [*She gets out of her chair with considerable effort, aided by her servants.*]

LA TR. Then on foot—if your Grace so wishes—will you honor me by accepting my hand?

[*The chair is taken off to the right by servants.*

LA TRÉMOÏLLE offers RAFAËLE his hand.

The city bells ring the death-knell in the distance.]

RAFAËLE. Yes, on foot. [*Catching sight of KARLOO.*] Oh, Captain! It is you? Good! You surely will tell me what is happening?

KARLOO. Only what has been told you, Madame: it is a review.

RAFAËLE. But those bells?

KARLOO. They ring on all occasions presided over by Monseigneur le Duc.

RAFAËLE. But these terrified faces I see around me? You yourself? You are so pale!

KARLOO. Oh, I have been freed from prison, thanks to you. And I am like the rest of the inhabitants of this city: not a whit too gay!

RAFAËLE [*very anxious and nervous*]. They are hiding something from me!

ALBERTI. Madame, in the name of heaven, let us go! In a few moments we shall be unable to get through this crowd!

ALL [*supplicating her*]. Señora!

RAFAËLE. Yes, yes! [*Aside.*] They are all lying! [*Taking a little child by the hand and drawing it to her.*]

Come here, my dear child! Are you here to see the soldiers, too?

CHILD. Yes, Madame, and the condemned prisoners. They're going to burn them in the Place——

RAFAËLE [*with a piercing cry*]. Oh! [*She falls into the arms of her attendants. The child is taken from her.*]

ALBERTI. That wretched child!

RAFAËLE [*her hand on her breast*]. How horrible! This everlasting slaughter! My God, what I am suffering! Take me away! My God!

KARLOO [*rushing forward and supporting her*]. Madame!

[*The chair is quickly brought to her.*]

RAFAËLE. My God! Give me air! Air! I'm choking! Blood! I'm choking! [*She is made to sit down.*]

KARLOO [*in despair*]. Madame, in the name of heaven—— My dear, dear child!

WOMAN SHOPKEEPER [*crying*]. Dear angel!

[*DOÑA RAFAËLE is surrounded. The women are especially attentive.*]

ALBERTI [*bent over her*]. My God, she's dying!

[*DOÑA RAFAËLE rises, supporting herself on the two women, trying to breathe; then she falls back heavily into the chair.*]

KARLOO. Dead!

[The word is repeated in whispers and undertones by those immediately about her. The men take off their hats.]

ALBERTI. Messieurs, Messieurs, not a word to Monseigneur! Let me have time to prepare him for this awful news!

[RAFAËLE is carried into the shop, where the women crowd round her body, crying. They screen her from the audience during the following. The drums, which have not ceased to beat, sound closer; the bells ring as before.]

LA TR. Divine vengeance!

KARLOO. And that angel will pray for him!

[A company of halberdiers appears in the gateway, and clears the way of people, who scatter to the right and left, standing behind the ranks of soldiers. After the halberdiers comes the procession, which marches slowly, as at a funeral. At the head are three drummers assiduously beating the funeral roll. The whole procession descends the stairs, then turns to the left, reaching the stage, and finally disappears into the street on the same side.]

After the drummers come the Spanish mus-

keteers and the pikemen in armor. Then trumpeters, the herald, mace-bearers, the standard-bearers of the Swiss regiments, Lombards, Portuguese, Neapolitans, Germans, etc. Then three drummers precede the lancemen, who enter, followed by the clerks of the Court of Blood, judges, and provosts' guards. NOIRCARMES appears, then VARGAS and DELRIO. Finally, beneath a dais borne by lackeys bearing his arms, comes the Duke, accompanied by his pages and the attendants of his house. As he arrives under the gateway, all save KARLOO and LA TRÉMOÏLLE kneel; they stand with their backs to the wall at the right. After the Duke appears, the chanting of the penitents (their heads in cowls, and wax candles in hand, marching in two lines, at some distance apart) is heard above the sound of the drums and ringing of the bells. These are under the gate when the Duke arrives at the centre of the stage. As this chant increases, DOÑA RAFAËLE'S attendants give way to their grief; they sob, kneeling. The Duke, who cannot see RAFAËLE'S body, stops and speaks to VARGAS, who is ahead of him.]

ALBA. Vargas, why are those women crying? I have forbidden that!

[VARGAS bows and goes to the women. ALBERTI shows him RAFAËLE'S body, stretched out on the chair, a crucifix on her breast. VARGAS, deeply moved, stands stockstill, and takes off his hat.]

VARGAS. Monseigneur, there is some one dead in this house: a young girl.

[*They all take off their hats.*]

ALBA [*the thought of his own daughter occurs to him, and he takes off his hat*]. A young girl! God is terrible in His vengeance!

KARLOO [*aside*]. He is, tyrant!

ALBA. Let them weep, Vargas, let them mourn for the young girl!

[*He makes a sign for the procession to advance. It continues as before. The Swiss Guards follow the Duke, then come monks wearing cowls, and chanting the "Dies Iræ." The gray monks walk slowly. Then comes a monk dressed in white, bearing the Spanish crucifix. Black monks appear carrying candles. GALÈNA, BAKKERZEEL, and CORNÉLIS enter, hands bound, each escorted by a soldier, who walks*

at his right. Then comes MAÎTRE CHARLES with his assistants. When the prisoners arrive upon the stage, to the left, and pass near KARLOO, they see him weeping.]

GALÈNA [*in an undertone, as he advances toward him*]. Coward, you are free! We are about to die!

CORNÉLIS [*following GALÈNA*]. How much did you get for betraying us, traitor?

KARLOO. Traitor? I?

BAKKERZEEL. Accursed Judas!

ALL THE PRISONERS. Judas! Judas!

KARLOO. This is frightful! You accuse me? Me? Me?

[The procession continues during the following. Next come the Italian musketeers and arquebusiers, then the regular infantry, under MIGUEL and RINCON; these close the column.]

LA TR. [*controlling KARLOO*]. Monsieur, I beg you——

KARLOO [*to LA TRÉMOÏLLE*]. But this is horrible! It's a lie! It was not I, Monsieur! I swear it was not I!

LA TR. [*quickly*]. I know that—it was a woman!

KARLOO. A woman? What is her name? Monsieur, tell me her name!

LA TR. I do not know that; I know only that she came to Monsieur le Duc last night, and that she left the Palace this morning with a passport to Lille.

KARLOO. That is at least a clue—a passport for Lille!

LA TR. Like yours and mine!

KARLOO. I have only time enough to run to the Grande-Place, through the by-streets. I shall meet you at the Porte de Flandre—she must have gone that way. Wait for me, Monsieur, wait for me!

LA TR. Very well, Captain.

KARLOO. Ah, these insults! The dead man reminds me of my oath! Sleep in peace, your revenge is about to be accomplished!

[He goes up-stage to the left, and disappears in the direction taken by the procession. Then the crowd covers the stage again. In its endeavor to follow the procession, it rushes to the stairway, knocking aside the bystanders, and finally disappears under the gateway, while LA TRÉMOÏLLE gives a last look at the dead girl.]

Curtain.

ACT V

ACT V

SCENE I: RYSOOR'S *home; the same scene as in Act II. The tabouret is no longer before the table, and the chair which was to the right of the table is now at the back of the stage, near the fireplace.* DOLORÈS and GUDULE are present.

GUDULE [*standing at the window, which she closes, frightened*]. Oh, Madame, the crowd is overflowing the Place! And the soldiers are forming ranks! The church is wide open; all the priests are standing at the doors, to give absolution to the prisoners who are coming.

DOLORÈS [*who is watching for KARLOO. She stands at the entrance of the room*]. Yes! But *he* doesn't come!

GUDULE. Madame, dear Madame, we can't remain here! Even the servants have left the house! Let us go away! Don't look at the horrible scene!

DOLORÈS [*she now looks for KARLOO out of the door which is down-stage*]. Run away if you like, *I*—well, if I don't watch for him here, where else can I?

GUDULE. Oh, Madame!

DOLORÈS [*bitterly, as she goes toward the right*]. He is not coming! He has been free for an hour! He should have come to me first, but—no! God knows what he is doing! Where can he be? Does he think of *me*?

[KARLOO *enters precipitately through the garden door. The moment GUDULE sees him she goes out through the main entrance, which she closes behind her.*]

DOLORÈS [*seeing KARLOO*]. It's he at last! [*She runs to him.*] My God! it's you! At last, it's you!

[KARLOO, *without answering her, lays his cape and hat on the table.*]

My Karloo, you are free—free and safe!

KARLOO [*standing with the table between them, and not looking at her*]. Dolorès!

DOLORÈS. What if they were bringing you with them, *there*! I should have thrown myself from this window!

KARLOO [*disturbed*]. Dolorès, what are you saying? And at this time!

DOLORÈS. Let me tell you how much I love you! I have suffered so much, I have the right to be mad with joy!

KARLOO. No, Dolorès, I swear you haven't that right!

DOLORÈS. But if I have you again——

KARLOO. Your husband is dead!

DOLORÈS. Ah!

KARLOO. He killed himself.

DOLORÈS [*sorrowfully*]. Ah—God!

KARLOO. Dead, Dolorès—that is what I had to tell you—[*his voice trembling*—dead. He forgave us, you and me!

DOLORÈS [*at first she sobs, then says joyfully*]. Pardoned, both of us? Then you have no more regret? Why do you look at me that way?

KARLOO. Are you sure that he understood this pardon as you do? He said that we must separate—forever!

DOLORÈS. Separate! Then do I want his forgiveness? This is not forgiveness; it is chastisement.

KARLOO. Dolorès, this is blasphemy—he is now dead—your husband! Take care!

DOLORÈS [*with tenderness*]. Did you accept this pardon on those conditions?

KARLOO. I? I don't know.

DOLORÈS. You don't know?

KARLOO. No; I came here with a fixed deter-

mination; ready to leave you—but the moment I see you my head is turned—love, duty, crime, virtue—it all seethes and is confused! I am not sure what I want—I don't know. [*He falls into a chair to the right.*]

DOLORÈS [*going to him tenderly*]. I know; you love me—we are everything to each other—that is the truth!

[*KARLOO tries to close her lips.*]

KARLOO, our awful nightmare is now at an end. Let us leave this house, which is not ours; let us escape from this past where we were not alone. Let us go and be happy and free, both of us. Let us love somewhere else.

[*The drums beat the funeral march in the distance, which sounds nearer and nearer.*]

KARLOO [*trembling*]. Listen!

DOLORÈS. What?

KARLOO [*standing*]. They are coming! [*He goes quickly to the window and opens it.*]

DOLORÈS. The poor wretches—that is one more reason—let us go!

KARLOO [*springing back in horror*]. The scaffold! There it is—and the faggots!

DOLORÈS [*runs forwards and stands between KARLOO*

and the window, which she closes]. What difference does that make? They are not prepared for you!

KARLOO. No, no—I want to wait for them—see them!

DOLORÈS [*forcing him to come down-stage to the right*]. The idea! See them? Why?

KARLOO. Do you know what they shouted to me, just now, as they were passing through the streets? They called me coward, traitor, Judas! They accused me of betraying them—me—think of it! Me, Karloo! [*He goes up-stage, left, above the sofa.*]

DOLORÈS. And what of it?

KARLOO. Horrible! To be accused of treason—and by them! Now they are about to die, there, at the stake! Their last words will be to curse me! [*He again goes up to the window.*]

DOLORÈS [*intercepting him, then taking him to the left*]. Let them curse you, what of it? Let them cry out at you—now, come!

KARLOO [*with his eyes on the Place, in spite of DOLORÈS*]. But not to know that wretch who has betrayed us, be unable to carry out my oath!

DOLORÈS. My God! Not go away! An oath! Did you make an oath?

KARLOO. On my life!

DOLORÈS. Leave the dead in peace, and remember only the oaths you made to me. They are the only good ones!

KARLOO. I have sworn, do you hear? On my hope of a future life!

DOLORÈS. What did you swear?

KARLOO [*disengaging himself and running to the window, which he opens*]. To put a dagger in the person who betrayed us!

DOLORÈS [*speechless with terror at first, she staggers back to the table, where she supports herself for an instant*]. A fine promise—really! How necessary!

KARLOO [*standing between DOLORÈS and the window*]. I swore!

DOLORÈS. To be an assassin, in order to please that dead man! And you dare admit it—that is fearful! Horrible! [*She rushes to him and forces him to come down-stage toward the left.*]

KARLOO. I made an oath.

DOLORÈS. You, my Karloo, put a dagger into some one—nonsense! That would be sheer madness! Poor Karloo, don't do that! You have been betrayed—very well, what is done is done! Let us go away—I won't betray you. [*She has gradually pushed him to a position in front of the table.*]

KARLOO. And then have all Brussels say, as those poor prisoners did: "There is the man who betrayed us!" And then drag out a life of dishonor—no! I must prove my innocence, and I will write it with the blood of the guilty one on the flagstones of this city!

DOLORÈS [*standing at the other side of the table*]. You are out of your mind! Where is the guilty one? Who will tell you who he is? Who?

KARLOO. I have already been told that it is a woman!

DOLORÈS. A woman? You say a woman? My God, that is absurd—a woman! Do women meddle with such things? And you believe that? Can you really think——

KARLOO [*again going up-stage*]. I am sure—the person who told me——

DOLORÈS [*again barring his passage*]. A poor wretch and a coward! He knows nothing about it. So you believe everything that is told you now?

[*The drums are heard approaching.*]

KARLOO. There they are! [*He clings trembling to the table.*]

DOLORÈS. No, not yet! Karloo, Karloo whom I adore! Don't stay here! Don't! You cannot stand it—only listen to me—do this for my sake; I have

been willing to sacrifice my life for you—and I love you! Do you love me? Tell me—yes or no?

KARLOO [*still looking out of the window*]. O God, yes! And I have promised not to!

DOLORÈS. Then come, Karloo! Don't look! Think of it: we have a whole lifetime of love and happiness before us—[*the drums sound still nearer*]
—there is no one to stand between us now! [*She cries out against the drums, which are now beating very loudly.*] Stop it, you cursèd—— [*The drums cease beating.*] It's nothing, you see? They are far away now! Don't listen! Come with me—just a step! It's all over now! Now we are free!

[*The drums beat louder than before. There is the noise of great excitement on the Place. The music from an organ is heard playing until the end of the scene.*]

KARLOO. Ah! [*He leaves DOLORÈS' side, and goes to the arched window.*]

DOLORÈS [*in despair, as she comes down to the left of the table*]. These men! This is how they love! And we sacrifice ourselves——

KARLOO [*sobbing, as he steps back from the window*]. You are right, Dolorès, this is atrocious! They are now standing on the faggot heap! Bakkerzeel—and

poor Galèna! My friends! Oh, I can't look! I can't! Take me away! [*He staggers down as far as the table.*]

DOLORÈS [*triumphantly, as she runs to open the garden door*]. At last!

KARLOO [*worn out, leans upon the table, and says in a whisper, while his eyes are always turned toward the Place*]. Let us leave this house—this city!

DOLORÈS [*returning to him—also in a whisper*]. Yes—both of us!

KARLOO [*with the table still between them*]. Together!

DOLORÈS. Together—yes—now, come!

KARLOO. But can we leave the city?

DOLORÈS. You have your passport?

KARLOO. Yes, but you?

DOLORÈS. I have mine!

KARLOO [*trembling, as he still clutches the edge of the table. He turns suddenly toward her*]. Yours?

DOLORÈS. Like yours—to Lille.

KARLOO. To Lille?

DOLORÈS. Yes.

KARLOO. You?

DOLORÈS. I am telling you! Come, now!

KARLOO [*looking wildly at her*]. How did you get it?

DOLORÈS. I went to the Palace for it.

KARLOO. This morning?

DOLORÈS. Yes.

KARLOO [*stepping back, thunderstruck*]. Great God! how horrible!

DOLORÈS. What is the matter?

KARLOO. This woman—at the Duke's—this morning! That woman—at the Duke's—last night!

DOLORÈS. Last night!

KARLOO. It is she!

DOLORÈS. No!

KARLOO. It's you! It's you! You have betrayed us! You miserable——! Dare you deny that you are the one?

DOLORÈS. Ah, Karloo!

KARLOO. Leave me—don't touch me! [*He disengages himself and darts toward the right, where he falls into a chair.*]

DOLORÈS. Pity me!

KARLOO. God's vengeance! And I have been looking for her! And here she is! Who else?

DOLORÈS [*who has fallen to the floor*]. Ah, Karloo! Don't curse me! Let the others do that—not you!

KARLOO. Fiend—traitress—coward—coward!

DOLORÈS [*on her knees, making her way toward him*].

You don't know all, my Karloo. He wanted to kill you. When he left me he said: "I am going to kill him!" I was mad with terror—stark mad—Karlool! I swear I was raving mad! I only tried to save you—I loved you so much! It was for your sake, for you!

KARLOO [*taking her hands in his*]. Your love! Your love has made me a perjurer and a traitor! Your fatal love has brought these poor wretches to the scaffold, and a whole nation to its ruin. Your love is hellish, deadly! I do curse you! I execrate, I hate you! [*He throws her to the floor.*]

DOLORÈS. Ah, Karloo, you are killing me!

KARLOO. No, not yet!

DOLORÈS. What are you going to do?

KARLOO [*dragging her to the window*]. Come here, Madame! First, look at your work!

DOLORÈS. Pity me!

[*The windows are red with the reflected light of the faggots. Screams and murmurs of horror are heard from the Place.*]

KARLOO. Look at it! Look at your faggot heap—it's burning!

DOLORÈS. Pity me!

KARLOO. Look—count your victims!

DOLORÈS. Karloo—ungrateful——

KARLOO [*raising her and forcing her to look*]. You must accustom yourself to flames—you must have some notion of what hell is like—hell, where your love is dragging us!

DOLORÈS. Mercy!

KARLOO. Listen! They have caught sight of me! Listen now, listen!

THE PRISONERS. Karloo—traitor! Traitor!

KARLOO. Do you hear?

DOLORÈS. My God!

KARLOO. And do you not also hear the dead man crying out: “Remember your oath?”

DOLORÈS [*rising in terror*]. No, no——

KARLOO. “No matter who the guilty one may be, strike, have no mercy!”

DOLORÈS. Karloo, would you strike me?

KARLOO [*drawing the dagger*]. My oath!

DOLORÈS [*wild with terror, as she struggles to free herself*]. With your own hand—no! You wouldn’t do that! Pity me—I’m—afraid!

KARLOO [*losing his self-control*]. I have sworn!

DOLORÈS. No, no—don’t—leave me!

KARLOO. I have sworn, I have sworn! [*He plunges the dagger into her.*]

DOLORÈS [*falling to the floor*]. Oh!

[KARLOO *throws his dagger down*.]

Now go—you have killed me. And I loved you so!
I loved you so——

KARLOO [*nearly out of his mind*]. And I have killed
you! I! I!

DOLORÈS. At least you can join me, now! Come!

KARLOO [*falling to his knees before her, an inanimate mass, and covering her with kisses, while he sobs*].
I will come with you—I am so miserable! Dolorès,
my sweetest love! O God! O God!

DOLORÈS. Come, then——

KARLOO [*standing*]. Wait! I am coming! [*He runs to the window, stands in it, and cries out.*] Executioner—[*excitement in the Place*—you lack one man!
Make way for me on your faggot heap!

DOLORÈS [*rising in order to see him*]. Ah!

KARLOO [*to DOLORÈS, his voice full of loving tenderness*]. You see? I am coming, I am coming! [*He goes swiftly from the room. DOLORÈS falls dead.*]

CURTAIN.



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